

# **Gazetteer of India**

**HIMACHAL PRADESH**



सत्यमेव जयते

**BILASPUR**

# **Himachal Pradesh District Gazetteers**

## **BILASPUR**



*BY*

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**HIMACHAL PRADESH**

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## FOREWORD

I have great pleasure in introducing this Gazetteer on Bilaspur District, the fifth in the series of Himachal Pradesh District Gazetteers.

I am glad the Gazetteers Unit has brought out the comprehensive and informative volume and hope it will serve as a useful guide to all those engaged in administration, welfare, research etc.

I congratulate the State Editor and his team mates for their efforts in bringing out this volume.



L. Hmingliana Tochhawng,  
Financial Commissioner,  
Himachal Pradesh.

## P R E F A C E

The present volume, fifth in the series of the district gazetteers of Himachal Pradesh, is not merely a revised edition of the Gazetteer of the erstwhile Bilaspur State brought out in 1910 but is re-written keeping in view the latest changes and progress in the social, economic, cultural and political fields. In the last two decades after the merger of Bilaspur into Himachal Pradesh, basic and phenomenal changes have ushered in an era of consciousness and confidence among the people. This is amply reflected in this volume.

The area which, for centuries, had been a princely State till the withdrawal of the paramount power, was formed into a centrally administered Unit in 1948. In the year 1954 it was merged into Himachal Pradesh constituting one of the districts. Bilaspur can boast of having within its boundary the highest bridge in Asia and the second highest in the world as also a gigantic multi-purpose Bhakra Dam over the River Satluj. The dam caused a dead loss of a substantial agricultural area and submerged its historical seat of power, the old Bilaspur town, into Gobind Sagar. This sacrifice gave to the Nation a gigantic hydro-electric institution and provided property to the neighbouring States by bringing under irrigation thousands of dry acreage of land in North India.

Despite serious handicaps we have tried to do our best in bringing out this volume in quick succession. It could be possible by undertaking the ordeal of arduous extensive and intensive touring, for the collection and verification of the facts, legends, architectural data etc of this difficult hill terrain quite a large part of which is still not connected by road transport and no part of which is connected by rail.

Apart from the Simla Hill States Gazetteer (Bilaspur State) which was published as far back as 1910, the explorers and scholars whose works stood us in good stead, during the course of

compilation of this volume, include Achhar Singh, J.B. Fraser, Charles Baron Hugel, William Trebeck Moorcroft and a host of others who deserve our acknowledgement.

I acknowledge the encouragement, guidance and deep interest evinced by Shri Hminglana Tochhawng, the Financial Commissioner, Himachal Pradesh, with deep sense of gratitude. I place on record my grateful thanks particularly to the following departments for furnishing suitable material to us.

1. Geological Survey of India
2. Meteorological Survey of India, and
3. Census Department of Himachal Pradesh.

My thanks are also due to Shri Goverdhan Singh incharge of the Secretariat Library for his ready and ungrudging help, the H.P. State Library and all the Departments of Himachal Pradesh who appreciated the importance of gazetteers and helped us in the collection of information and latest statistical data pertaining to them.

I owe my gratitude and appreciation to Shri D. D. Sharma, Editor, who assisted me in editing, and to Compilers namely Sarv Shri S. L. Sharma, B. S. Rawat, K. S. Thakur, R. D. Negi, B. K. Sharma, J. L. Sharma, P. C. Sharma and J. C. Chauhan for putting in hard labour and intelligence for preparing the chapters of the Gazetteers. My thanks are due next to all other members of the staff for sharing my ordeal in fulfilling the challenging task.

I must also record my appreciation and gratitude to Shri D. S. Kutlahria who had, as Sub-Editor in the Unit, collected the voluminous material which formed the base for my editing. He had done a good job. I also owe thanks to Shri Kashmir Singh S.D.M., Bilaspur, during the period he was officiating as Deputy Commissioner, Bilaspur in rendering every help we required of him in the collection of material for this volume.

My thanks are also due to Shri Chatar Singh Panwar, Joint Director, Department of Public Relations, Himachal Pradesh, for

having made available photographs which have been included in this volume.

Last but not least I deem it my pleasant duty to express my thanks to Dr P.N. Chopra, M.A., Ph. D., Editor, District Gazetteers and the staff of the Central Gazetteers Unit, Ministry of Education and Social Welfare (Department of Culture) Government of India, New Delhi for their effective role in planning and co ordinating the work of preparation of the District Gazetteers. The Unit scrutinized the draft of this volume and made certain suggestions with a view to improving the standard and quality of the publication. A portion of the expenditure incurred on the compilation and printing of the district gazetteers is being met by the Government of India.

Lastly, I must express my thanks to M/s. Greater Punjab Press, Chandigarh for extending their co-operation in printing the volume in record time and providing facilities to the team of our Compilers.

Readily owning shortcomings, whatsoever, in the volume I present it to the readers and shall consider my labour amply rewarded if it interests the scholars, administrators, social anthropologists and more of all, the general readers.

Simla — 171002,  
Independence Day, 1975

M.D. MAMGAIN  
State Editor

# Chapter I

## GENERAL

The area now known as Bilaspur district was a princely State for centuries together and with the lapse of paramountcy in India, unlike other principalities, was taken over on the twelfth of October, 1948 under the Central administration as a separate Centrally administered unit, which exception stands explained in the words of Shri V.P. Menon, the author of *"The Story of the Integration of the Indian States"*. He says, "Geographically it was a part of Himachal Pradesh and should have been included in it but for one consideration ; this was the gigantic multi-purpose Bhakra Dam Project over the Sutlej. The main dam site was in Bilaspur and a substantial area of the State, including the capital and the palace, would be submerged when the dam was constructed. The project was conceived about 1919 but became a practical proposition only after the conclusion of the Second World War. About the time of partition, the Government of the Punjab were negotiating with the Rajah of Bilaspur for the construction of the dam and had nearly come to an agreement with him. If the Government of the Punjab had undertaken the project the distribution of the water would have been at their discretion. This would have been unfair to PEPSU and Rajasthan which were beneficiaries under the scheme equally with the Punjab. Under the Act of 1935, the Government of India had no power to control multi-purpose river valley schemes. The Centre obtained this power only under the new Constitution. If, therefore, the Government of India were to intervene—and it was necessary that they should in this case – the only alternative was to take over Bilaspur as a Chief Commissioner's province. By so doing, the Government of India would inherit the jurisdiction and powers of the Rajah of Bilaspur and would have the final say. We could have achieved the same purpose if we had amalgamated Bilaspur with Himachal Pradesh, which was already a Chief Commissioner's province. But Bilaspur had problems of its own. Till such time as the Bhakra Dam was completed, displaced persons rehabilitated, and compensation paid to those dispossessed of their lands, it was essential in the interests of both the State and its people that Bilaspur should be under the care of the Centre."

Subsequently by an Act of the Parliament of India, this Centrally administered unit was merged on 1st July, 1954 into Himachal Pradesh, as a district.

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\*Menon, V.P. *The Story of the Integration of the Indian States*, 1961, p. 285.

### Origin of the name of the district

The district of Bilaspur comprises the entire territory of the former principality of Kahlur. It was named as Kahlur after the first fort built by Raja Kahal Chand, sixth in the line, in the ninth century A. D., and called after his name as 'Kot Kahlur'. In about 1653, Raja Dip Chand, fifteenth of the line, shifted the capital from Sunhani and founded a new one at Vyaspur, in honour of sage Vyas and the present name Bilaspur appears to be its degenerated form.

### Location

The district of Bilaspur lies between 31° 12' 30" and 31° 35' 45" North latitude and between 76° 23' 45" and 76° 55' 40" East longitude in the outer hills of the Himalayas next to the Punjab plains and forms a part of the basin of river Satluj which flows meandering across it for about ninety kilometres.

### General boundaries

It is bounded on the north by Mandi and Hamirpur districts, on the west by Hamirpur and Una districts, on its south lies Nalagarh area of Solon district. It is encircled on east and north-east by Solon and Mandi districts. It lies on both the banks of river Satluj which forms the boundary between Mandi and Bilaspur districts up to the centre of the eastern boundary.

The area of the district is about 1,161 sq. km. The maximum length from east to west is about 51 km and maximum width from north to south is about 43 km.

The human population of the district according to 1971 census is 1,94,786, giving a density of about 167 persons per sq. kilometre. Out of this the rural population is 1,85,288 and urban 9,498. The population of Ghamarwin tahsil is 1,19,738 and that of Bilaspur Sadar 75,048. The urban population is mainly concentrated in Bilaspur town.

### History of the district as an administrative unit

The district of Bilaspur was formed in 1954 when the part 'C' State of that name was merged into Himachal Pradesh. Before 1947, Bilaspur was a State administered by a Raja.

During the princely regime, the State of Bilaspur was divided into twelve *parganas*. These *parganas* still exist but have no administrative importance. *Parganas* of Sadar, Bahadurpur, Ratanpur, Fatehpur and Kot Kahlur are now in Bilaspur Sadar tahsil and the *parganas* of Baseh, Bachhretu, a part of Gherwin, Sunhani, Ajmerpur, Tiun and Sariun comprise Ghamarwin tahsil. The district was formed of the whole territory of the former State and

since then there have been no inter-district changes in its territory. However, for administrative convenience, 137 villages, measuring 128.7 sq. km of tahsil Ghamarwin were transferred to tahsil Bilaspur Sadar. For purposes of revenue administration, each tahsil has kanungo and patwar circles. There are two kanungo circles in Bilaspur (Sadar) and three in Ghamarwin tahsil. Number of patwar circles at present is sixteen in Bilaspur (Sadar) tahsil and twenty-four in Ghamarwin tahsil. Five police stations are located at Bilaspur, Bharari, Talai, Ghamarwin and Kot Kahlur, with four police posts at Bilaspur city, Swarghat, Namol and Olanda (Golthai) near Bhakra.

During the princely regime Raja was the head of the administration of erstwhile State.

## TOPOGRAPHY

### Natural divisions

Bilaspur stands divided into two natural parts formed by the Satluj river. The river flows from east to west with a large bend mid-way and divides the district into two approximately equal parts; the part, on the right bank being termed *parla* (trans) and that on the left, *warla* (cis). These natural divisions have been utilized for the formation of tahsils-*parla* becoming Ghamarwin tahsil and the *warla* called Bilaspur (Sadar) tahsil. Each of the two tracts so formed stands naturally further sub-divided into side valley of stream, sub-valleys of streamlets all enclosed by hills of varying altitudes. The entire area of the district, therefore, presents a picture of a mixture of hills alternating with dales. On its extreme west is Dhar Kathar and further to the east is the Naina Devi range. These two hills lying north to south with the river in between provided in the bygone days, when wars were a regular feature, three natural lines of defence. But the valley between the Bandla Hill and Ratanpur presented, as it still does, a more exposed area, leaving a gap, a convenient traversing ground for the marching armies from the south-east.

### Elevation

The district is mostly hilly and has no mountains of higher altitude from the mean sea level. The elevation of the lowest point is about 290 metres and that of the highest is about 1,980 metres.

### Configuration

Although the district does not lie on a very high elevation, yet its shape and external features are determined and marked by the lesser hills and comparatively wider valleys; besides this the river Satluj and the smaller *khads* which drain the area, also contribute to the shaping of the face of the tract. The configuration varies from almost flat land along the bank of Satluj river and the valleys, to extraordinarily broken land of pargana Kot

Kahlur and *pargana* Ajmerpur and precipitous slopes of the main ranges. A new and remarkable change that has been brought about by human effort in the configuration of this district is the construction of Bhakra Dam resulting in the formation of a large lake in which many villages have sunk under water. As a result of the formation of the Bhakra Dam an area of about thirty thousand acres belonging to two hundred and fifty six villages of this district was submerged. Fourteen villages namely, Dhiungli, Tunglehri, Brahmani Khurd, Tahra No. 27, Bhater Kundu, Chouki, Kashneur, Bedla, Dibru, Chohal, Gahrul, Kuthera, Bheri and Kandwari of the district totally sunk under the water of Gobind Sagar.

### HILLS

There are seven main ranges of Naina, Devi, Kot, Jhanjhar, Tiun, Bandla, Bahadurpur and Ratanpur constituting the hill system. These have been so prominent that the erstwhile princely State, at times used to be called 'Sat-dhar-Kahlur', meaning, Kahlur of the seven hills. Surrounding completely the outskirts of the district, they stood like sentinels against the invading armies of the enemy for centuries. Even when the battering blows of Tughlaks, Lodhies and Moguls had reduced to submission the proud Katoh State of Kangra, Bilaspur continued to exist enclosed within the formidable hills and flourish through the very friendship of Ferozeshah Tughlak, Ibrahim Lodhi and Aurangzeb.

With the Satluj river as a barrier these hills provided almost impregnable defences. Hathawat in the west and small Simla Hill States in the east and south and *parganas* of Dhatwal and Mahalmori in the north, therefore, seem natural historical adjuncts to the present district territory. All the major streams that originate in, or pass through, Bilaspur district drain into the satluj river.

**Naina Devi hill :** This range runs for 30 km in length. The river Satluj has cut its way through it near Bhakra. On this hill lies a celebrated temple dedicated to Naina Devi, at an elevation of about 1,100 m from the mean sea level. *Parganas* of Kot Kahlur and Fatehpur lie on this range. The Kot Kahlur portion is clothed by bamboo forest. Some important forts such as the Kot Kahlur fort and Satgarh fort or Fatehpur fort (where seven small forts have been constructed) also lie on this range.

**Kot hill :** It runs for about 30 km in length, starting from village Naghiar and ending in Bagphal jungle along the bank of the Satluj river. It is clothed with the forests of bamboos and chir (*pinus longifolia*) out of which the Bagphal grows very fine stock of bamboos. The well known forts of Bachhretu, Basiah, Naun, or Shiwala Bachhretu Kot (after which this hill is known) and Dagoga Malhot are located on this hill. The highest peak,



known as Kakrer peak with an altitude of about 1,430 m from the mean sea level crowns it. *Parganas* Baseh and Bachhretu are within the ford of this hill.

**Jhanjhar hill :** The *Ser khad* divides this hill into two parts, the northern known as Jhanjhar and the southern as Badol. In the northern portion there are relics of a fort constructed by Raja Sansar Chand of Kangra, and the well known *chir* forest, known as Badhaghat forest, clothes it. Jhanjhar is the highest peak on this about 1,100 m above the mean sea level. In the southern part, known as Badol, there are famous temples of Devi Badoli and Guga Gherwin. Samoh *chir* forest and Ghaneri bamboo forest also lie on it. Near Samoh there is said to exist a limestone quarry which used to be worked in former days.

**Tiun hill :** This hill is about 10 km in length and has two marked portions the eastern, known as Sariun and western called as Tiun, forts of Sariun and Naurangarh, temples of Peer Bhiyanu, Haramba Devi and Malya forests (famous hunting grounds), situate on the eastern part while the western part contains Tiun fort, Sidh Gurunath, bamboo forests and Phasseti hill. The height of the Sariun peak is about 1,350 m from the mean sea level.

**Bandla hill :** Its length is about 17 km. The capital of Bilaspur (now the district headquarters) situates on its western declivity. Near the villages of Deoli and Ghaghas Deo, *Ali khad* has broken it in two parts, northern and southern respectively known as Barmenas and Bandla. Its highest peak has an altitude of 1,375 m from the mean sea level.

**Bahadurpur hill :** The *Ali khad* divides this hill into two parts. Northern portion is known as Tatoh and the southern as Bahadurpur which contains a small and beautiful oak and deodar forest. Raja Bijai Chand had his summer abode constructed near the Bahadurpur fort which lies at an elevation of about 1,980 m from the mean sea level and is the highest peak in Bilaspur district.

**Ratanpur hill :** This range is about 11 km long and the Ratanpur fort lies on it at an elevation of about 1,230 m. It was from this fort that General Ochterlony inflicted defeat on Amar Singh, the Gurkha leader.

## VALLEYS

The hill system just described has given rise to the formation of various smaller or bigger vales and dales as also to the basins of river or streamlets. It is vain to look for any spacious valleys in this district, because of the generally hilly nature of the terrain. Nevertheless, whatever smaller or bigger valleys have been formed are comparatively, especially in

their lower extremities, more fertile, better cultivated and by far more populated than the summits, shoulders and sides of the hills.

**The Satluj Valley :** The Satluj flows for about 90 km within the district starting from Kasol hamlet where the river enters into the boundary of the district and running up-to village Neila where it leaves the district. The valley formed by it is by no means wide as the hills rising high on its either bank restrict its width. Patches of flat land, however, occur on either side, here and there, almost all along the course of the river, more particularly up-to Bilaspur town and generally to the area lower down the town which now have been engulfed by the Gobind Sagar.

**The Chaunta Valley :** Although bearing a different name yet it is also a part of the Satluj valley stretched nearly 13 km up stream from Bhakra, where the grounds, on both sides of the river are very flat and fertile. This area, however, also now forms a part of the reservoir Gobind Sagar displacing a considerably large number of people from the fertile chunks of land which has gone to form the bed of the waters of Gobind Sagar.

**The Danwin Valley :** The most renowned of the valleys is Danwin valley situated between the Bahadurpur and the Bandla hills about 10 km in length and nearly half as wide. It is famous for its produce of maize, rice, sugarcane, ginger and wheat crops.

The entire area being hilly and undulated, there exist neither any plateaus nor plains in the sense as are commonly understood. Only small flat lands along the banks of the Satluj river and other streams are seen here and there.

## RIVER SYSTEM

**Satluj River—**The Satluj river rises from lake Manasarowar and enters Himachal Pradesh on entering Kinnaur district. Moorcroft, in his journey to Manasarowar, seems to have approached its source, having come upon the Satoodra or Satluj. It issues from the north-western extremity of this lake, where in the dry season it measures about 10 m in breadth and takes a north-westerly course for about 300 km through a country of an awe inspiring and even terrific sublimity, as far as Khab (in district Kinnaur). Close to this it receives the river Spiti from the north-west. Above the confluence, the Satluj is about 20 m wide; its bed being at about 2,600 m above the level of the sea. Gerard observes, "It is not easy to form an estimate of the water contained in the Satluj; for although the breadth can be determined, yet within the mountains there is scarcely a possibility of sounding it, on account of its great rapidity". This is the only river which passes through the district of Bilaspur. After passing through Mangal area of Solon district and Suket

area of Mandi district, it enters this district at village Kasol in *pargana* Sadar in the north-east. It is a deep and rapid river, and runs at the rate of about eight kilometres an hour. Its average width within the district is about forty-five metres. Dividing the district almost in two parts, it flows within this district for about ninety kilometres leaving it at village Neila, *pargana* Kot Kahlur in the south-west and enters the territory of Punjab.

A little below Bilaspur the Satluj takes a north-westerly course, after which it runs again to south-west and then flows south-east. The Satluj abounds in fish and is remarkable for the coldness of its water reminding one of its elevated and distant source. It was the river of the treaty between the English and Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1809. This river flows through narrow gorges in the hilly terrain due to which there has been no change in its course. It makes no waterfall in this district.

When the volume of water is less during the winter months of October to March, people cross the river by ferries or on inflated skins. The volume of water starts increasing from April onwards because of the melting of snow on the higher snow-clad ranges. During the rainy season the volume of water increases still further, raising the level of Gobind Sagar in which the water is arrested for controlled use.

Principal tributaries that join it from the south-east are Ali, Ghamrola and Ghamber streams. On the other bank i.e., from the north-west, Moni and Ser streams bring their tribute to it.

Within the limits of the district, Satluj is generally crossable, at places navigable but nowhere fordable. There are two bridges and some ferries (*pattans*) over this river where people can cross it. The bridges previously were at Dehar and Bhajwani and the ferries at Kashnu, Uttapar, Chonta, Bhakra, Ghamber, Ali *Khad*, Jewari, Kachloor, Pangwana, Oal and Nakrana to which additions have been made recently. Both the bridges submerged in the Gobind Sagar, and, therefore, two new bridges, one at Kandror, a few kilometres above Bhajwani and the other at Salapar a few kilometres above Dehar have been constructed.

Apart from the bridges and ferries the river is crossed at various places by means of boats and inflated skins. These are prepared locally and have attracted the attention and curiosity of many a European traveller while passing through Bilaspur. William Moorcroft, a well known traveller visited Bilaspur in 1820 and has left the following interesting account of crossing through inflated skins. \*"The Setlej was about one hundred and fifty feet in

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\*Moorcroft, William & Trebeck, George: *Travels in the Himalayan Provinces of Hindustan and the Punjab*, 1841, pp. 40-43.

breadth, and was running at the rate of five miles an hour. The skins used for this purpose are those of bullocks, which are stripped off in this manner. An incision is made in the back part of a hind leg, almost the whole length, and the skin, being flayed off from the hock upwards, is turned forwards, the same management being observed as in the process technically termed casing a hare, except that the skin is cut through below and round the knees and hocks, the legs being left adhering to the body. The hide is then doubled up, and buried for a few days, in order to suffer so much decomposition as will favour the separation of the hair, which is rubbed off by the hand or a blunt wooden knife, without abrasion of the skin. The skin is then turned inside out, and the natural openings of the eyes, & c., stitched up, it is then turned back again, and the main incision sewed up with thongs of rawhide. The open ends of the limbs are tied, except one, which is left open, as tube by which to inflate the skin. The thin tar procured from the deodar and other species of pine, is then poured into the skin, and shaken about in it until the flesh inside is well charged with it, and it is then tanned exteriorly, by steeping in an infusion of pomegranate husks. When required for use the waterman blows into it through the hind tube and ties up the opening. A double thin cord is fastened round the inflated skin, across which the waterman places himself in his chest, holding the string with his left hand, whilst, with his right, he manages a short oar, assisting his passage with his hands and feet. Sometimes a piece of stick is tied in one of the legs, and left projecting from it for the waterman to hold instead of the string. The passenger, with as much baggage as he can carry, sits astride the ferryman's back, with his knees bent, and resting on the skin. When heavy and bulky articles are to be transported, two skins are brought together, the ferryman of each laying hold of one of the projecting legs of the other skin, and frame or raft, supporting the burden, lies across the backs of both. A charpai, or Hindustani bedstead, forms the most convenient raft. Horses and mules are led over, the waterman holding them by a string in one hand, whilst he paddles himself and his human load across in the manner above described. When not inflated the skin is slung over the back, and carried about without any inconvenience. No expedient seems equally well adapted for the transport of large bodies of men and baggage over the most rapid rivers, or so likely to be serviceable as a wreck buoy or float to be carried on board ship. The cost of a deri is usually a rupee and a half, and its weight is not above sixteen pounds. A couple of deri men usually accompany persons of rank hunting in the hills, in order to carry them across the mountain streams, the rapidity and fury, if not the depth of which, render it impossible to ford them without such assistance."

Baron Charles Hugel a German tourist was next to make the following description in 1835. "The sight of a number of these skins, with the head

and feet of the beast left on them as in life, constantly floating across the river, is very amusing." G. T. Vigne who crossed Satluj in 1838-39 says, "The Sutlej, and, in fact, all the rivers of the Punjab, are crossed upon inflated buffalo and sheep skins."

The description by these eminent persons holds good by and large. On the formation of Gobind Sagar ordinary as well as motor boats have also started plying in it as inflated skins can not work in the still waters of the lake.

The formation of the Bhakra Dam was made possible by the sacrifice of 256 villages of the district and the town of Bilaspur, which submerged into the Gobind Sagar uprooting more than ten thousand people. The whole area was the granary of the district and the people had to leave their homes for ever. This sacrifice of the people will go down in golden words in the history of India's post-Independence development, Bhakra multipurpose project being one of the first hall marks of India's determination for progress and a symbol of modern engineering skill.

The special benefit, which this river extends to the people of this area, is that the firewood which flows in the river during the rainy season from hilly areas, is caught for their domestic use. Only the big logs are not removed from the banks of the river until the Government officials have seen them. If a sealed log is caught erroneously the same has to be returned to the owners through Government depots. The fuel wood weighing not more than twenty kilograms can be collected without any restriction. The collected logs used to be distributed by the State officials during erstwhile State regime; fifty per cent being retained for State use remaining fifty per cent being granted to the collector. Another benefit is the fish which abounds in the river and other streams. In Gobind Sagar fisheries development is being undertaken on modern scientific lines.

Due to the tremendous increase in the volume of water during the rainy season floods have not been unknown, in fact there have been many though with no loss of any kind within the district. The construction of Bhakra Dam has helped to check the menace of floods and utilization of the water for irrigation and power generation.

**Ali stream :** Ali, one of the notable streams of the district, takes its rise near village Mangu Giyana in tahsil Arki of Solon district and after coursing, for some distance, in that area enters the district boundary at villages Kothi Harar and Manothi, situated in *pargana* Bahadurpur. It is a perennial stream but as its source lies in the snowless mountain the volume

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\*Vigne, G. T.—*Travels in Kashmir, Ladak, Iskardo etc.* 1844, p. 65.

of its water, particularly during summer months is not much. Nevertheless, in the rainy season it is generally impassable. When in spate, it is crossed by means of inflated skins at places where the current is not very rapid.

Apart from the usual modes of crossings, a new arched bridge has been constructed across this stream at a place known as Ghaghas, about 14.4 km up the stream from Bilaspur town. After coursing for about 35 kilometres within the district it joins the Satluj river in between the hamlets of Kherian and Talwar, at a distance of about 3 kilometres north of Bilaspur at a point known as Beri Ghat. In its course, wherever possible, its waters are utilized for running local water-mills as also for purposes of irrigating certain low lying lands. It abounds in fish of delicious variety.

**Ghamber khad :** It has its source in the Simla Hills. Passing through Sabathu and Baghal tracts it enters the district territory at village Neri of *pargana* Ratanpur, finally debouching in the Satluj at villages Dagra and Nerli at a distance of about 13 kilometres. Its bed is very deep and only a small area is irrigated by its water. It contains different varieties of fish. Bilaspur-Nalagarh road passes through this stream. In rainy season when the stream is in flood, it becomes unfordable and the traffic has to be suspended for hours. Pack animals including camels cannot cross it during the rainy season. Many travellers including sports-men, particularly interested in fishing, have fallen under the spell of this fascinating little stream. Skene Dhu who wandered in this stream as far back as 1913 has left his impression in the columns of the *Pioneer* of October 3, 1913, as follows :—

"The Gambar proper rises below Tara Devi, the road from Simla to Sabathu, crossing it by a bridge, the only one on the whole length of river. Here it is but a small stream and holds no fish of any size. It is wild and picturesque little river ; it is the prettiest Himalayan stream. Fish of over 10 lbs must not be expected in profusion, but down at the junction, anything between 2 and 60 lbs may be hooked, so that it behoves one to have good tackle. The Satluj here is a large swift river, the Gambar also at the junction is unfordable ; so that a lively time may be expected if a big fish is hooked above the meeting of the rivers. From Simla there are two or three ways of reaching the river."

**Sir, Ser or Seer khad :** It is a large stream. This is the largest tributary of the Satluj river which takes its rise in Mandi district and drains the Kotki-Dhar and a greater portion of the Ghamarwin tahsil. A new pukka bridge was constructed on this *khad* in 1958 at Ghamarwin, headquarters of the tahsil of the same name to be mentioned shortly. Other two small *khads* known as Sukar and Saryali rising in Hamirpur district, join this *khad* at village Balgar after draining the western portion of the district. It enters the Bilaspur district at village Hatwar in Ajmerpur *pargana* meeting the

Satluj about 16 kilometres below Bilaspur, at villages Seri, *pargana* Baseh and Matla, *pargana* Gherwin, after coursing for about 65 kilometres in the district territory. Many water-mills are run by its water. It is not much beneficial for irrigation purposes because of its deep bed. Bilaspur-Haritaliagar and Aur-Talai roads cross it. In rainy days its water flows so fast that it becomes unfordable and can only be crossed with the aid of the inflated skins.

### Utility of streams

The streams supply approximately forty per cent of the total artificial irrigation in the district, the rest sixty per cent being obtained from springs which are to be found in many villages, some running all the year round while others during and after the rainy season.

## LAKES AND TANKS

There are no natural lakes, nevertheless the district enjoys the honour of having the largest man-made lake not only in Himachal Pradesh but one of the biggest lakes in India, Gobind Sagar, an outstanding example of human ingenuity, skill and labour. The utility of this lake is well-nigh so well-known that it is hardly necessary to go in details here. However, it is relevant to say that the lake stores a huge volume of water for meeting out the irrigation and power needs.

Many tanks, *cutch* as well as *pukka*, exist. The important ones may be mentioned here.

A tank in the local parlance is called *toba*. During the reign of Raja Mahan Chand the State was invaded by Sikhs and during the expedition the invading troops stationed themselves at a place known as Vijay Nagar on the outskirts of Kot, the seat of the then Government. These invading troops constructed a tank and planted lotus flowers in it. Hence the tank is sometimes remembered as *Toba Kolanwala* viz., the lotus tank. The actual epithet of the tank is, *Toba Sanghwana* i.e., the lion tank. This name must have been given to it after its builders i.e., the Singhs now known as Sikhs. With the passage of time the village around this tank became to be known as *Toba Sanghwana*.

**Tank Riwalsar :** This small tank exists in village Panol. There is a tradition about it. Once the deity of Riwalsar lake, situated in Mandi, became antagonised and shifted to this place. The news of this event went from pole to post and people of the surrounding areas started to flock the place. At that time islands also used to float here but none is to be found now.

**Jagat Khana tank :** This tank is said to have been constructed by Raja Hira Chand in 1931 Bk (1874 AD), when the State was visited by a famine. Its area is about 200 square metres. It can store about 9,000 cubic metres of water. Besides, a place for watering the animals and washing of clothes exists here, fish too have been introduced in it.

**Tank at Swarghat :** The tank owes its existence to Raja Hira Chand who got it built during the period of a famine in 1874. It has an area of about 350 square metres with a capacity to store 1,200 cubic metres of water. Its depth is about four metres.

**Tank at Naina Devi :** This is comparatively a bigger tank with an area of about 1,200 square metres and storing capacity for 1,200 cubic metres of water. Its water is used for drinking, washing and bathing.

**Tank at Jamthal :** This tank situates towards north of Bilaspur at a distance of about 25 km, at a place lying about 8 km above the Simla-Bilaspur Mandi motorable road. Its area is about a thousand square metres with a water storing capacity of about four thousand cubic yards. It has a depth of about four metres. Its water is used for drinking, washing and bathing.

**Tank of Kasol :** Its area is about nine hundred square metres and it has a storing capacity of 2,700 cubic metres, of water. Its depth is about three metres. The water that finds exit from it is used for irrigation and drinking purposes.

**Tank at Toba Sanghwana (Toba Kaolanwala)**—This water tank owes its existence to Raja Bije Chand, who got it constructed. It has an area of about 17,600 square metres with a capacity to store 53,000 cubic metres of water. Its depth is about three metres. Its water comes in handy for use of live-stock.

### SPRINGS AND SPRING HEADS

Springs are found scattered in many areas. Water from springs is put to various uses according as the situation, volume and velocity of a particular spring may warrant. They form a good supply of water for drinking by human beings and beasts, for washing and bathing and for irrigating lands. Some springs are reputed for medicinal properties of the water therein. For instance, water of Markand spring situated near Bilaspur is considered holy. It is believed that a dip in its water cures children suffering from skin diseases while a bath at the main spring, on Baisakhi day, cures sterility in women.

**Luhnd spring :** A spring, called Luhnd, at Dadrana, *pargana* Fatehpur and close to Swarghat bungalow, contains water of reputed medicinal properties. It is resorted to, particularly in May, by people from plains,



suffering from goitre and various other complaints. Especially it is useful for patients suffering from stomach ailments.

**Bassi spring :** This is situated in village Bassi in *pargana* Kot Kahlur. Pilgrims and visitors from far and near flock to this place, particularly during the summer to derive benefit from its water believed to be sacred. The place presents daily a scene of a fair. The water of this spring has been led to a close by pukka tank with an area of about 17,000 square metres. It can contain about 70,000 cubic metres of water. Its depth is about four metres. Cattle are watered here.

#### **Snow fields, glaciers and ice caves**

No hills or mountains, with great elevation from the mean sea level exist, and thus there are no snow fields, glaciers and ice caves, though in winter snowfalls occur on Bahadurpur range which situates at about 1980 m above the mean sea level but it melts away within a week or so or even earlier. Once in a while after an interval of years, it may snow even in Bilaspur town, but this possibility is becoming very rare with cutting down of forests and increase of habitation.

### **GEOLOGY**

Most of the soil of the Bilaspur district is somewhat sandy. \*This is intermixed with patches of stiff clay. As a major portion of the district adjoins Hoshiarpur district, and, the Siwalik range runs through it, the following geological description produced from the *Hoshiarpur District Gazetteer 1904 Part-A* is more or less applicable to this district also.

“The range consists entirely of waste beds of sand alternative with loams and clay in much smaller proportion with extensive beds of loose conglomerate or “gravel”

The rock-facies to be met within Bilaspur fall into two broad stratographical zones ; these are :—

- (i) The outer or sub-Himalayan zone composed of sediments for the most part of Tertiary age but including sub-recent deposits ; and
- (ii) Central zone composed of granite and other crystalline rocks.

The more important sub-divisions of the former zone are known as Sabathu, Nahan and Krol. Mostly the outer hills are conglomerates,

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\*According to the *Census of India, 1951 report for Bilaspur district (Vol. 26)* .

sandstones and soft earthy beds but the rocks on the northern side of the boundary consist of limestones wherein some fossils are found, especially in the Haritalyangar area.

### **Geological antiquity**

Bilaspur formerly known as Kahlur is a district ranging in elevation from approximately one thousand feet (305m) along the boundary of Hoshiarpur district (Punjab) on the west to six thousand five hundred feet (1980 m) along the boundary of Solon district (Himachal Pradesh) in the east. Configuration varies from almost flat land along the bank of the Satluj river and valleys of extraordinary broken land of *pargana* Kot Kahlur. Bilaspur consists of seven Dhars i.e. Dhar Naina Devi, Dhar Kot, Dhars Jhanjhar and Ratanpur, Dhar Tiun, Dhar Bandla and Dhar Bahadurpur.

### **Geological formation of the district**

Bilaspur is mostly covered by the foot hills of the Himalayas except the eastern most portion which is formed of the hills which are grouped with lesser Himalayas.

Geologically, most of the area is covered by a comparatively younger strata, representing the Tertiaries and Quarternary rocks, and it is only in the eastern portion that the older rocks belonging to earlier period are found. The older formation have thrust contact with the Tertiaries. The following table gives the geological sequence in this area :—

|          |                              |   |  |  |
|----------|------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Tertiary | Recent                       | Alluvium, Sand beds, boulders.                  |  |  |
|          | Pleistocene                  | Older alluvium, gravel terraces sand beds, etc. |  |  |
|          | Pliocene & upper Miocene.    | Siwalik system                                  | Upper  | Boulder beds, sand rocks and soft clays.         |
|          |                              |   | Middle   | Sandstones and clays. Sandstones much indurated. |
|          |                              |   | Lower (Nahans)   | Concretionary clays (streaked purple).           |
|          | Middle and lower miocene.    | Kasauli   | Greenish micaceous sandstones and green or orange clays and clay-slates.                         |  |
|          |                              | Dagshai   | Massive greenish to greyish hard sandstones, dark-red and purple coloured shales and dark clays. |  |
|          | Eocene                       | Sabathu   | Olive-green shales, fossiliferous lime-stones, etc.  |  |
|          | Pre-tertiary                 | Krols   | Cherty limestones and dolomite with shales.  |  |
|          |                              |   | Yellowish, greenish earthy shales  |  |
|          |                              |   | Greyish, pink, earthy & buff massive dolomite.   |  |
|          |                              |   | Western Zone   |  |
|          |                              |   | Eastern Zone   |  |
|          | (Khairi)<br>Quartzite Series |   | Hard, greyish massive dolomites and limestones.  |  |
|          |                              |   | Pink limestone, thin banded at base.   |  |
|          |                              |   | Dolomites, shally limestone with some slates.  |  |
|          |                              |   | Pink pale pink quartzites, strongly ripple marked, interbedded red gritty shales.                |  |

## Tectonics

The area as a whole, has undergone an intense degree of folding and faulting during the process of the upheaval of the Himalayas, and as such the natural sequence of the rocks is missing. A number of thrusts have taken place, thereby bringing the older formations in juxtaposition with, or, to overlie the younger formations.

### Krol series

The older rocks are seen exposed just east of the town of Bilaspur, forming a high hill known as Bandla-ki-dhar. Here it is mostly composed of cherty limestones, calcareous quartzites, some whitish quartzites, etc., and lie with a thrust plane, overlying the Dagshais or Siwaliks.

The rocks are highly folded, and can be followed eastwards with the Dagshais exposed as a 'Window Series' among them. The Chhabia-wan-ki-dhar is mainly composed of soft to hard pink quartzites, calcareous quartzites and pinkish limestones. A number of beds of hard dolomite are seen along the Satluj valley at Dehar.

### Tertiary

The tertiaries constituting of Sabathus, Dagshais, Kasaulis, Siwaliks, etc., are distinguished from the older rocks by the absence of an appreciable amount of metamorphism. The tertiaries are mostly sandstones, shales and clays, and have thrust contact with the 'older formations', whereby the latter have come to rest over the Dagshais or Siwaliks as the case may be. One such thrust plane known popularly as the "Great Boundary thrust or fault" lies just east of the town of Bilaspur and runs roughly in a N.N.W. direction.

**Sabathus :** These consist mainly of olive-green, oily looking splintery shales, some khaki coloured quartzites and nummulitic limestones. These are exposed as thin veins, on the anticlinal ridges formed by the Dagshais. Carbonaceous shales are sometimes seen among the Sabathu shales.

**Dagshais :** Overlying the Sabathus are the Dagshais, which consist of alternations of purple and dark coloured cindery and sandy shales, and purple and dark coloured sandstones. The sandstones are hard, compact and at times quartzite, when they are greyish or light purple in colour. These are also current bedded and ripple marked.

The Dagshais cover vast area and show intense degree of folding. They have thrust contact with the members of Krol series, and are seen overlain by dolomites or calcareous quartzites. These are also seen as 'Window series' in the valley of *Ali khad* and *Panjgain Khala*. The highest

peak of the district at Bahadurgarh fort is formed of Dagshais and Kasauli rocks.

**Kasaulis :** The Dagshais pass into Kasaulis, which are made up mainly of greenish to yellowish green sandstones, and some clays and shales. The sandstones are micaceous, soft to hard and highly jointed. Clayslates are also met with among the sandstones.

**Lower Siwaliks (Nahans) :** Overlying the Kasaulis or Dagshais conformably, the lower Siwaliks consist of soft to hard massive sandstones, brownish to greenish brown in colour, and hard concretionary clays, brick red, orange or chocolate in colour. The sandstones are rudely jointed and coarsely current bedded. Usually the sandstones and the clays are streaked purple. The Siwaliks as a whole are intensely folded and the lower Siwalik rocks as a rule, occupy the anticlinal ridges, formed by the chain of hills running along the strike of the rocks, viz., roughly N.N.W.

**Middle Siwaliks :** The lower Siwaliks pass imperceptibly into the middle Siwalik rocks, and it sometimes becomes very difficult to distinguish one rock from the other. The sandstones are soft to hard and less jointed, these are usually brownish in colour, but greyish types are common. As a rule the sandstones are fine-grained but medium to coarse-grained varieties also occur among them.

The clays are soft and less concretionary in contrast to the lower Siwaliks clays. Structurally the middle Siwaliks occupy the outer flanks of the anticlinal ridges, i.e., the slopes of the hills.

**Upper Siwaliks :** With a change in the colour of facies, i.e. from brownish to greyish, the middle Siwaliks pass conformably into the upper Siwaliks, which consist of greyish sandstones, sand rocks, pebble and boulder beds. The sandstones are loosely jointed, and usually medium to coarse-grained and occupy the lower horizons, whereas the boulder beds occupy the upper ones. As a rule the upper Siwaliks occupy the low lying flat areas representing the synclinal basins.

**Older Alluvium :** This consists of boulder beds, loose sandbeds, gravel terraces, etc. The sandbeds are very micaceous, and the boulders are cemented in a matrix composed of calcareous sandy material. A number of gravel terraces are seen along the Satluj valley.

**Newer Alluvium :** The present day deposits of sand, gravel and boulders along the river valley and stream and *khad* sections are included here. Among the boulders can be seen the rocks of all systems ranging from the cambrian quartzites to indurated Siwalik sandstones.

## Soils

The soils as can be expected from an area mostly covered by most soft rocks of Siwalik system, are usually sandy, particularly towards the west of Bilaspur town. Even on the eastern portion, the soft tertiaries produce sandy soils. However, in certain higher portions, soil is not sandy, and is a weathered product of calcareous quartzites of cherty limestones or sometimes pink quartzites. The soil capping is usually thin, because of high degree of denudation during rains.

Below are given the names of some of the localities, where a particular rock type is observed very prominently, these have been arranged according to geological sequence :

### Krol Series

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Calcareous quartzites, cherty limestones quartzite, etc. | Juras ( $31^{\circ} 22' : 76^{\circ} 50'$ )<br>Laghat ( $31^{\circ} 24' : 76^{\circ} 50'$ )<br>Patta ( $31^{\circ} 21' : 76^{\circ} 58'$ )     |
| Dolomite   | Dehar ( $31^{\circ} 25' : 76^{\circ} 49'$ )<br>Naihar  |
| Pink quartzite   | Kothi ( $31^{\circ} 23' : 76^{\circ} 51'$ )<br>Maloti ( $31^{\circ} 18' : 76^{\circ} 55'$ )<br>*Dhar<br>*Taloh<br>*Jamthal                     |
| Pink limestone   | *Daroba  |
| Sabathus   | *Bandla (Miyan)<br>*Nog<br>Sungal ( $31^{\circ} 23' : 76^{\circ} 50'$ )  |
| Dagshais   | *Bahadurpur<br>Kandror ( $31^{\circ} 15' : 76^{\circ} 45'$ )   |
| Kasauli  | Chaleli ( $31^{\circ} 27' : 76^{\circ} 47'$ )<br>Bagh ( $31^{\circ} 15' : 76^{\circ} 38'$ )  |
| Lower Siwalik  | Samoh ( $31^{\circ} 18' : 76^{\circ} 47'$ )<br>Basai ( $31^{\circ} 20' : 76^{\circ} 31'$ )<br>Naina Devi ( $31^{\circ} 19' : 76^{\circ} 33'$ ) |

**Middle Siwalik**

Ghamarwin (31° 25' : 76° 44')  
 Dadhol (31° 27' : 76° 40')  
 Changar Talai (31° 27' : 76° 31')  
 Hari Taliyengar (31° 32' : 76° 37')

**Upper Siwalik**

Barthin (31° 20' : 76° 38')  
 Badgaon (31° 18' : 76° 36')  
 Gandhalwin (31° 34' : 76° 37')

N. B. Localities marked with asterisk are not marked on the map.

**Mineral wealth**

Geological formation of the district having been stated it is now easier and relevant to discuss the existing and potential mineral wealth of the area. Old gazetteer of Bilaspur has, as far back as 1910, struck a pessimistic note about the existence of mineral wealth in the area in these terms. "There are practically no minerals of any value". Since then, although no detailed and regular geological survey has ever been conducted to find out the volume and value of the mineral wealth yet certain individuals have made, in their own way, useful observations about the existence and extent of minerals. The account that follows is based on such observations and we have mainly drawn upon such reports and material as "Geological Survey of India progress Report for the Field Season 1951-52 detailed Mapping and Investigation of Glass sands in Bilaspur, Simla Hills by P. C. Sogani" reproduced in the Industrial Survey Report for Himachal Pradesh 1955-56, old gazetteer, and, History and Geography by Mian Achar Singh. In addition to these sources the material has been supplemented by some account specially prepared for this volume by the Department of Geology, Government of India.

Some of these observers in sharp contrast to what was thought by the author of the *Bilaspur State Gazetteer 1910* are quite optimistic about the economic value of the mineral wealth in the district. *The Industrial Survey Report of Himachal Pradesh* states, "There are enormous deposits of limestones, dolomites, clay and quartzites suitable for various industries in the district but lie in dormant stage because of transport problems." Apart from these minerals traces of iron, gold, building material, lignite, coal, pyrite, gypsum and slates have been found. Each mineral may now be discussed in its own right in the succeeding paragraphs.

**Building material :** Stones of various types for building and milling purposes are worked in many parts of the district for local use. In the lower ranges the sandstones of the sub-Himalayan zone, Nahan and Kasauli sandstones are worked while in the higher regions granites, dolomites, limestones, quartzites and phylitic slates are exploited.

Milling is carried out in hundreds of tiny mills run by water power and grinding about one quintal of *atta* daily. The stone used is invariably granite.

**Clays :** The clay deposits of the district have been studied by B. Parsad (1941) and M. L. Misra of Banaras Hindu University. The field and microscopic evidences indicated that clay deposits are of transported sedimentary origin. The clays have been found quite useful for a cement plant.

**Coal pyrite and gypsum :** Pyrite and gypsum are found in carbonaceous shales of Sabathus in negligible quantities. In the Malyawar forest coal is found in small quantity.

**Gold :** Alluvial gold is reported from several streams and rivers and gold washing is done by a special group of people who also work in the watermills. The quantity produced in this way is insignificant and a man can collect worth about twenty-five paise in a day. After the formation of Gobind Sagar many such places have been submerged and the few people who earned their living by collecting gold from the sand have lost the petty incomes that they derived from it.

The Dawlas derive gold from the sand of Satluj river and streams. Especially, the gold derived from the confluence of nullah Karyal and Ser stream is considered of the superior quality. Dawlas used to pay to the erstwhile Bilaspur State a sum of five hundred rupees per annum as contract money.

**Iron :** There exists an iron mine in the forests of Loharra in *pargana* Ratanpur. Raja Hira Chand got extracted iron from this mine but the income was lesser than the expenditure and, therefore, the mine was closed.

**Lignite :** Some thin seams of lignite have been noticed in the crimson flysh sediments (Sabathu-Dagshai ?) in the nullah near Delag (31° 24' : 76° 46').

#### **Limestones and dolomites**

There are extensive deposits of both the dolomite and non-dolomite types of limestones but none is finding use except the little local consumption. The limestones of which there appears no dearth in the district are suitable for the manufacture of cement. No tax was levied by the erstwhile State on any mine except that of Naina Devi from where limestones used to be sold in the plains.

**Orpiment :** Traces of orpiment are reported to have been found.



**Quartzites :** There are certain white quartzites which when crushed may be used for the manufacture of glass found in the district. Besides boulders of white quartzite found among the old terraces of recent gravel bed may as well provide a useful resource for glass making sands. The quartzite suitable for the glass industry are found in the following localities :

- (i) In the Nihal Cho Nala Near Sirha,
- (ii) Sungal,
- (iii) Parnale,
- (iv) Bandla and Chamlog,
- (v) Solag,
- (vi) Bhajun, and
- (vii) along the Satluj valley small hill of Nalti. In the area of Jamthal quartzite boulders of suitable qualities are found.

The quartzite deposits suitable for the glass industry are according to some, inadequate to meet the demand of glass factory. Further investigation in this direction is needed.

### Slates

There are three stone slate mines at village Bangwar and Ghumarput in *pargana* Bahadurpur and Chalahli in *pargana* Sariun. But the slates are coarse and inferior. The erstwhile State had enforced no restrictions on these slate mines. Local inhabitants utilise these slates for roofing their houses.

### Special features such as earthquakes and earth tremors

The district falls within the seismic range. Generally the earthquakes and earth tremors are very uncommon and inobservant. Light earthquakes are experienced after interval of many years.

## FLORA OR BOTANY

### Botanical divisions

The area falling within the boundaries of the existing Bilaspur district has never been, hitherto, botanically explored along the systematic lines by the local rulers or by any government appointee. Even the casual tourists or travellers have not botanised, to any extent, in this small region. In the absence of any previous record or writing the knowledge of flora of the district, even today, must inevitably remain scanty and limited.

Flora is commonly understood to include a list of plants of a particular region. In the absence of any discrimination, the list to be a

comprehensive one, must include all the species of vegetation existing as a result of either spontaneous growth or grown with the aid of human efforts. Thus no tree, no plant, no fern, no climber, no grass and no crop will fall outside the scope of the flora. To describe all these varieties of vegetation is obviously a job in itself to be accomplished by a competent botanist. Therefore, in view of the limited scope for and scanty knowledge of botany what is described in the lines that follow is no more than an attempt at indicating only the broad contours of vegetation growth in the district.

Generally speaking, the district comprises foot hills of the Himalayas, part of the basin of river Satluj, numerous vales and dales. Lying between the altitude of 290 m, the minimum, and 1,980 m the maximum, from the mean sea level, it has a temperate climate with rare snow-falls, abundant rainfall, considerable heat in summer but always less than in the adjoining plains. The soil, on the whole is sandy though intermixed with patches of stiff clay and extensive crystalline crops. The combined effect of all these natural elements is manifested in the vast variety of vegetative growth of which the more significant species, so far known and enumerated, have been grouped into a few altitudinal zones and set forth in Appendix I to this volume. It will be observed that XLVIII families and 148 species are found in the lowest belt ranging from 290 m to 915 m, XVII families and 24 species have been noticed in the next upper zone from 915 to 1,525 m and V families and 7 species have been found occurring in the upper most altitudinal range from 1,525 m to 1,980 m.

### Forests

The forests of the district, neither very rich nor extensive, lie in the sub-tropical zone. Topographically they lie in the inner Siwaliks and outer Himalayas. The *chil* and bamboo forests are found mainly on the Siwalik formation. A few patches of *chil* and bamboos which are met with on Karol, Dagshai and Sabathu series are of inferior quality. Scrub forests situated on the Siwalik formation are superior than the scrub forests growing on other formations such as Karol series where *Carissa spinarum* is predominating. *Chil* forests are mainly restricted to the northern and eastern aspects, while southern and western aspects in these forests are occupied by scrub forest.

The forests are limited to the rocky upper parts of the main ridges only. There are certain distinct types of forest growth in the district. Some of these types are overlapping but altitude, aspect and soil play an important part in their distribution.

The forests of this district constitute an area of 500 square kilometres or 42 per cent of the area of the whole district. The following four main varieties will give a fair idea of general distribution of types : --

**Scrub forests :** The scrub forests constituting about two-third of the total forest area are mainly found in the south-western and eastern parts of the district on Dhar Naina Devi, Dhar Kot, Dhar Tiun and Dhar Sariun. Elsewhere these are not very extensive, and are generally confined to the southern and western aspects. They are mainly composed of brush-wood, and, an over-wood of a varying proportion of miscellaneous broad leaved trees. Almost all these forests exist on the worst soil, the better soil having already brought under cultivation. Thus the timber trees are stunted, producing only fuel and small wood of poor quality. The single species of commercial value that grew scattered was the *khair* tree (*Acacia catechu*). It has unfortunately suffered indiscriminate and over exploitation during the war time and in the subsequent years for raising revenue. In certain places better protection from fire, over-grazing and indiscriminate cutting, have encouraged the extension of *chil* either as isolated trees or in groves.

The stocking situation varies considerably from place to place. In smaller forest blocks and in the densely populated, *parganas* like Tiun, Sariun, Ajmerpur and Sunhani, the growth consists of brush-wood only with very poor stocking. In certain places the ground is almost naked. In larger blocks and sparsely populated *parganas* like Kot Kahlur, Baseh, Bachhretu, Ratanpur and Fatehpur, the stocking is generally dense, though quite sparse in many places near the village boundaries. The brush-wood consists mainly of *Carissa spinarum* and *Dodonaea viscosa* and the overwood of *Anogeissus latifolia*, *Odina woodier*, *Acacia catechu*, *Stephegyne parvifolia* and *Zizyphus jujuba*. The over-wood is found scattered here and there in the shape of single trees except for *Anogeissus latifolia* which forms a distinct crop in the western parts of Dhar Naina Devi, Dhar Kot and Jajjar forest, and, *Bombax malabriculum* which predominates in Ghan forest of Dhar Sariun.

The principal species of trees met within these forests include *Anogeissus latifolia*, *Odina woodier*, *Acacia catechu*, *Stephegyne parvifolia*, *Aegle marmelos*, *Holarrhena antidysenterica*, *Bombax malabaricum*, *Eugenia Jambolana*, *Limonia acidissima*, *Ehretia laevis*, *Flacourtia ramontchi*, *Zizyphus iujuba*, *Mangifera indica*, *Cassia fistula*, *Wendlandia Exerta*, *Phyllanthus emblica*, *Ficus rumphil*, *Ficus bengalensis*, *Casearia tomentosa*, *Bauhinia retusa*, *Sapium insigne*, *Diospyros cordifolia* and *Acacia leucophloea*. The most important species are *sheesham* (*Dalbergia Sissoo*) and *tun* (*Cedrela Toona*). These occur at low elevations generally in or near cultivated lands and a good many *sheesham* are found on the banks of the Satluj. Now on the formation of Bhakra Dam all the *sheesham* and *tun* trees near the banks of the Satluj and up to 520 m have been totally felled.

Brush-wood comprises *Carissa spinarum*, *Dodonaea viscosa*, *Woodfordia floribunda*, *Adhatoda vasica*, *Murraya Koenigii*, *Nyctanthes arbor-tristis*,

*Mallotus philippinensis*, *Euphorbia royleana*, *Zizyphus nummularia* and *Lantana Camara*.

Climbers include *Bauhinia vahlii*, *pueraria tuberosa*, *Mimosa rubicaulis*, *Zizyphus oenoplia*, *Cissampelos pareira*, *Clematis gouriana*, *Caesalpinia sepiaria*, *Abrus precatorius*, *Cuscuta reflexa*, *ceyptolepis buchanani*, *vallaries heynoi* and *Inchnocarpus frutescens*.

Species of grasses are *Ischaemum angustifolium*, *Eriphorum comosum*, *Cynodon Dactylon*, *Chrysopogon montanus*, *Hetropogon contortus*, *Botheriochloa intermedia*, *Themeda anathera*, *Cyomopogon marthi* and *Aristida depressa*.

The scrub forests all over the district are burdened with heavy rights of grazing and lopping etc., which have, in many places, caused extreme deterioration in them. Dense good miscellaneous jungle is fast deteriorating into open 'Garna Mehndu' (*Carissa spinarum* and *Dodonaea viscosa*) forests which on further deterioration has changed into *Thohar* (*Euphorbia royleana*) plots in many places. Some areas have become quite blank and erosion has set in. The tree species, on the whole, are deteriorating decreasing in extent and yielding places to brush-wood in many places. Reproduction of the tree species is rare except for *Acacia catechu*, *Cassia fistula*, *Holarrhena antidysenterica* and *Anogeissus latifolia*, which in certain places are found reproducing themselves substantially. Coppice regeneration over the area felled in the past is satisfactory, but the growth is generally poor.

**Bamboo forests :** The bamboo (*Dendrocalamus strictus*) occurs gregariously in many places, generally mixed with miscellaneous scrub forests. Its presence, all over the district, either in small deteriorated groups or in considerably large areas, indicates its flourishing and extensive growth in the past and its gradual decadence and disappearance from many a place. At present the areas stock mapped under bamboos in the demarcated forests is about 1,410 hectares only, mostly in Dhar Naina Devi and Dhar Kot. Also on the western parts of the district sizable plots are found in Ghaniri, Pheti Dhar, Kasal and Dadnal. Some scattered and inferior clumps are met with too in Sangan, Jamali, Ghan and Jhanjhar forests. It occupies the altitudinal belt between 370 and 915 metres.

The bamboo usually occurs in scattered groups varying considerably in quality and density, from mere scrub to very dense growth. On the northern aspects, in sheltered depressions and in well drained moderately steep slopes as on the eastern side of Dhar Naina Devi, it forms pure dense crops over considerable areas to the exclusion of all other species. When these favourable conditions deteriorate the crop becomes more and more scattered and poor in quality, as on the western sides of Dhar Naina Devi and Dhar Kot. On hot aspects and poorly drained soils it is unable to compete with

scrub forest and is ousted by it. Gradient, aspect, soil and density of over-wood effect the spread of bamboos to a considerable extent. It flourishes best either in the open or under a very light shade. Large blocks of bamboo forest in the district are found on the loose tertiary sandy soils of the Siwalik formations. Its growth is very scattered and scrub-like on the Karol series with a rocky and dry soil. On very steep slopes like the belt along the eastern side of the crest of Dhar Naina Devi, the bamboo crop has either disappeared completely, or has become very scattered and stunted. The general condition of the bamboo forests is very deplorable. Almost all the clumps are badly congested. Thinnings or cleanings have never been done in them in the past. The bamboo fellings seem to have always been done without any special regard to the cutting rules. The clumps are choked with dead and half cut bamboos. In many cases the root stocks of the clumps have become so much elevated that they are past recovery now. The lopping of the bamboos for fodder is so heavy and common that this single factor is enough for the complete destruction of the valuable bamboo forests.

The bamboo flowers gregariously after an interval of certain years, and sporadically annually. The sporadic flowering varies from a few clumps to a fairly large group of clumps. The sporadic flowering is not of much importance except that it makes available some seed annually for sowing. No definite interval of gregarious flowering in this district has been recorded in the past. Mr. Coventry in his Working Plan of the State Forests recorded that the bamboos in Naina Devi flowered in 1900 and also about thirteen years before that; the Kasal forests flowered in 1880. There is no record of other flowerings before 1926 except that some areas in Naina Devi, Chaniri and Kot Dhar flowered in 1926. From 1926 onwards no wholesale gregarious flowering has taken place.

**Chil forests :** The *chil* (*Pinus longifolia*) is economically the most important tree of the tract. It is not only the source of resin, the most valuable forest produce of the area but also the main source of timber supply for local use as well as for export. The *chil* predominates in the central belt of forest areas consisting of five main blocks namely Jhanjar, Samoh, Seru Slasi (Bhaniri), Fatehpur, and Rahan. Also a few small areas namely Kalri, Ratanpur, Harlog, Lehri, Dodian, Dholak Chaknar, Marotan, Dhanola, Chalawa, Chogan etc., are found scattered occurring generally at an elevation from 460 to 1,220 metres on the north and north-eastern aspects of the main ridges. Even in the main blocks of *chil* forests, the western and southern aspects are generally covered with scrub forests containing very few *chil* trees, such as in Jhanjar, Tiun, Samoh, Jhaura, Gochar etc. Generally the tertiary sand rocks of the Siwalik and Kasauli formations suit its growth but it has not flourished on the Karol series and tertiaries constituting the Sabathus

and Dagshais. The total area under *chil* forests is about 2,830 hectares.

**Ban forests :** There is only one small plot of *ban* (*Quercus incana*) forests called Bahadurpur situated on north-eastern aspect of Bahadurpur ridge, forming a dense forest of all age classes. The crop in the central portion consists of well grown old trees but its quality and age falls towards the outer fringe of the area. Quite big trees up to about 3 m girth are still present in some parts, but not many. The age classes are present in groups. The older groups are occupying the middle of the forest. Some pockets of *ban* also occur on the western side of the ridge in sheltered portions but they are young and of very poor growth due to very steep and precipitous gradient and, due to very shallow and rocky soils. The under-growth is very dense and impenetrable in some places. The regeneration of *ban* is fairly good especially under light shade, but is not showing good progress due to the shade of the over-wood. In the open place it is doing well. In the centre is a deodar plantation and in the upper part a small group of a few old *Populus deltata* trees. The chief associates of *ban* in this forest are *Rhododendron arboreum*, *Pyrus pashia*, *Berberis aristata*, *Berberis lycium*, *Continifolium*, *Rhamnus dahurica*, *Myrsine africana*, *Pieris ovalifolia*, *Lonicera quinquelocularis*, *Rhus cotinus*, *Daphne cannabina*, *Prinsepia utilis*, *Ilex dipyrena*, *Zanthoxylum alatum*, *Cotoneaster bacillaris*, *Rosa macrophylla*, *Rosa moschata* and *Hedera belix*. These are all found generally in the under-growth.

Deodar (*Cedrus deodara*) is not indigenous in this area. Some plants were tried in the past by different forest officers at different times but only a few of them succeeded. About half a dozen trees are more than 1.5 m in girth, the biggest being more than 2 m. No attempt on large scale has been made to grow deodar. In 1927 a small plot about 0.4 ha in area, was sown with *kail* on the northern aspect near the fort. The crop is quite promising but was never added to. From 1929 onwards deodar planting was started on a large scale because of the difficulty and quite a good plantation of about twelve hectares in area has been successfully raised in the middle of the *ban* forest. It is doing well and the saplings are showing good growth. The height growth of both the species is quite good, but the growth in girth is somewhat less. This is due to the congestion of the plantations also.

During the recent times the flora of the district, especially in the basin of the Satluj has suffered extenuation and a good deal of extinction due to the formation of Bhakra Dam resulting in rise in the water level of the Satluj. Lacs of trees of all kinds on both banks of the river up to 520 metres river level, in two hundred and fifty-six villages, had to be clearly felled and removed on an area of over 12,140 hectares. Mangoes, bamboos, *sheesham*, *tun*, *pipal bur* and many other species of minor importance have thus met a common and the larger interest of the nation.

### Effects of Government policy on flora

With the merger of Bilaspur State into Himachal Pradesh a uniform policy concerning the forest management based on scientific exploitation and preservation has been extended to the forests in this district. The forests have been classified as reserve, undemarcated protected and demarcated protected, which cover an area of 500 square kilometres. Under the prescription of working plan of forests (1954-1974), some areas are closed to induce natural regeneration of commercial species supplemented by sowings and plantings of useful commercial species to replace the useless ones. With closure the soil conditions also improve. As such the useful commercial species like *Acacia catechu*, *Acacia Arabica*, *Salmaalial malabaricum*, *Dalbergia Sissoo* etc. are on the increase. Many measures are being adopted by the Forest Department for preservation of forests and tree growth and to check further degeneration as also to ensure economic exploitation of the forest wealth. Out of the total forest area of 500 sq km, undemarcated protected forests cover 377 sq km and demarcated protected forests 123 square km.

### Injuries to which the crop is liable

**Grazing :** The ill-defined right of grazing by an unlimited number of cattle owned by the right-holders stands recognised in demarcated forests, except Bahadurpur, a small forest of 90 hectares only. The total number of cattle grazing in these forests is about 69,874 (1954 working plan) showing an average incidence of grazing at 6 acres per animal and of browsing at 1.4 acres (0.5 ha) per animal, the combined incidence being 0.4 acres (0.1 ha) per animal. The area of undemarcated forests, generally called *charands* and '*dehati*' forests, is 38,350 hectares and the total number of cattle, including sheep and goats, is 1,31,417 giving an incidence of about 0.3 hectare per animal for the demarcated and undemarcated forests combined. Apart from this a large number of sheep and goats (about thirty-six thousand) of the Gaddies and Kanauras (non-right holders) come for seasonal grazing during the winter.

Grazing is a constant source of damage and its effects are not apparent to the common cultivator, generally concerned with it. The damage is caused by trampling and browsing which retard regeneration, destroy the existing low vegetation and change its character to xerophytic types and worthless grasses, lower the quality of the trees, and cause erosion, denudation and land slips. Heavy and unregulated grazing is bringing about a succession of worthless species and grasses. Good miscellaneous forests are changing into scrub forests, scrub forests into *Gurna-Mehndu* forests and *Gurna-Mehndu* forests into *Thohar* (*Euphorbia royleana*) forests.

Grazing in the scrub forest is gradually changing the character of the vegetation and decreasing the density of the vegetation. Species of inferior zerophytic types are on the increase and some parts have become quite blank.

**Lopping :** Lopping being a common and more or less an unrestricted right in all the forests, except *chil* and *ban* forests, causes enormous damage. Young trees are lopped to bare poles, leading shoots are chopped off, older stems are cut down to the main branches and only small bushes of leafy shoots are left here and there. By this indiscriminate lopping, almost all the miscellaneous trees become stunted, and unsound; seed production is reduced and the canopy is interrupted resulting in erosion on over-grazed ground under them. Out of the species protected against lopping *chil* is well preserved so far, *kelu* (*Cedrus deodara*) exists only in a small plantation, *tun* (*Cedrela toona*) is not found and *kikar* (*Acacia arabica*) is rare, *Shisham* (*Dalbergia Sissoo*) is not lopped much except for manure, but *khair* (*Acacia catechu*) is not spared at all. Bamboo forests are the worst sufferers and have been practically ruined.

**Drought :** Drought causes the largest number of casualties in areas and governs the problems of regeneration and afforestation. The rainfall is restricted to the months of July and August ; from April to June the sun is very hot and the weather very dry. Most of the trees planted and sown during the rainy season die in this period. Unless a seedling has weathered atleast two dry periods it is not at all safe. Once the plants have established themselves the mortality is low and even negligible. Weak monsoons and the failure of winter rains have a markedly injurious effect on the old crop also. In bamboo forests the culm production is much reduced.

**Frost :** The damage from frost is not serious except to the plantations of broad leaved trees, in depression along the valley of the river.

**Storms :** Wind storms, some of them very severe, are common in summer and cause damage to the forest buildings and much more to the *chil* wood, uprooting and breaking the *chil* trees.

**Snow :** Snow falls, though not heavily, at Bahadurpur only and causes damage to the *ban* trees by breaking and uprooting them. When occasionally the snow falls down to lower elevations, much damage is done to the trees. Mango trees, *inter alia*, die due to the frost which follows the snowfalls in the lower elevations.

**Wild animals and birds :** Porcupines cause much damage to the *chil* regeneration areas where the seedlings with the carrot base are nibbled at the base. They also eat through new bamboo shoots and girdle the bases



of *khair* trees. Monkeys uproot the *chil* seedlings in considerable numbers, to nibble the root-collar and eat the bamboo shoots and *chil* cones also. Pigs are responsible for a considerable damage in bamboo forests and in nurseries, eating new culms and digging into nursery beds. Parrots, flying squirrels and crows damage the seed of all trees, especially the *chil* cones.

**Climbers :** The climbing *lantana* shrub is on the increase in the Satluj valley, and large areas of undemarcated forests have been over run by it. In some parts it has reached the demarcated forests such as Naina Devi, Baseh and Bachhretu blocks and also in some parts of Jhanjhar and Fatehpur *chil* forests. No measures have been adopted for the eradication or control of this plant. Its growth is so thick and gregarious that it smothers all other vegetation by its luxuriance and becomes impenetrable even for beasts. The climbers that damage the trees are *Bauhinia vahlii*, *Spatholobus roxburghii* and *Pueraria tuberosa*. In bamboo forests they sometime cover the bamboo clumps and smother them. In some parts of Jhanjhar and Swarghat, *Bauhinia vahlii* damages the *chil* trees.

**Insects :** The attack of the bag worm, which defoliated some *chil* areas in 1931, was not repeated again. An insect has been reported to have defoliated certain areas of *Anogeissus latifolia* in Bachhretu block.

**Fires :** Fire constitutes one of the greatest dangers to the forests and in years of drought they are very severe. In scrub and bamboo forests the fires are rare and the extent of damage is not much unless they are very severe. In *chil* forests the fires are very common and the damage done is generally heavy. In regeneration areas the young crop is completely destroyed by severe fires especially where they are frequent. In the even aged crops especially in areas with dense undergrowth, the damage is enormous. The undergrowth covered with a mass of inflammable pine needles, makes the fire so serious, that not only the ground cover is completely destroyed but also it reaches the crown of the trees and burns and scorches them in large numbers. Many trees die and many others become useless for timber. In the areas under resin tapping the damage becomes more serious if the undergrowth is not removed. The resin channels catch the fire quickly and in cases when these channels have become too close, the cambium between them is burnt and the trees die. The flow of the resin decreases and if the tapping is to continue, extra length of the channels is required to make up for the loss of the burnt portion at the top of the channels. Fire reduces seed production by interfering in the fertilization of the cones and retards regeneration by destroying the seed on the ground and killing the cones on the trees.

The fire season extends from about the middle of March to the beginning of July. The fires are either accidental or deliberate. The common causes of deliberate fires include political reasons, mischief making, driving

away pigs and panthers, getting good crop of grass and taking revenge. The accidental fires are caused either by travellers and labourers by throwing of cigarette ends and lighted matches carelessly or by the zamindars by burning of their *khāriaturs* near the forests carelessly and, from accidents in slash burning. Accidental fires are generally controllable but wanton incendiarism is not possible to control.

The forest blocks which are exposed to the danger of incendiarism are Gocher, Rahan and Jhanjhar. These blocks of *chil* trees are in continuation of the forest blocks in Hamirpur district. Fires occur frequently in the adjoining forests of Hamirpur. This gives incentive and encouragement to the local people to burn these forests. Extensive fires now are only periodic, but when they break out they devastate the work of the previous years.

### FAUNA OR ZOOLOGY

The district has never yet been systematically and scientifically surveyed for zoological purposes and, therefore, the information on fauna is necessarily limited, based on certain sources, supplemented by enquiries.

Tigers once frequented the lower hills but are almost extinct now. Leopards (*bag*, *baghera*, *mirg*, *lakkar bagha*), are a constant menace to cattle, goat and sheep etc. The only protection against them are the fierce dogs if protected by an iron spiked collar. Wolves are also met with in the area adjoining the plains. Wild pigs being numerous are destructive to crops. Hares and monkeys are also common. *Ghural* (*Cemes goral*), *kakar* (barking-deer), *Sehar* (porcupine), *Barasinga* (antelope) and *chital* (spotted-deer) are also met with. Black and grey partridges and jungle fowls, the blue hill pigeon (*kabutar*), the common peafowl (*more*), the *chil* pheasant (*Chehir*) the *pukras* or *koklas* pheasant (*koklas*), the white crested *kalij* (*kolsa*), and *chukor* are found throughout the district. In the winter wood cocks are often seen in the valleys. There are quite large *mahsir* (*barbus tor*) fish in the Satluj and Ghamber (especially where it joins the river near Bilaspur). The river and the streams also hold Indian trout fish (*barilius bura*) and *gunch* (*bagarius varrellii*) fish is also found in the Satluj river where fishing is chiefly done by cast nets, but some also angle *mahsir* with paste. Mirror carp has also been introduced now and is doing well. Himalayan barbel (*saloh*) and *labio diplostomus* (*gid*) are also found. Cobras and other snakes are also abundantly found especially in the valleys and along the river and *khads*. Very rare cases of snake bite occur but the mortality is negligible.

To have a still better idea of the wild life found to have been existing in the district the readers may refer to Appendix II to this volume in which

twenty-four species of wild animals, thirty-seven species of birds, permanent denizens of the tract, seventy-three species of migratory birds and seven species of fish have been enumerated. These lists of wild animals, birds and fish, known up to now to exist in the district, have been roughly arranged into altitudinal belts to give a more accurate idea of their location.

For obvious reasons these lists cannot and do not represent the entire wild life existing within the district. The lists touch only a few famous and popularly known species constituting but only a minor representation of fauna. The limited space of gazetteer precludes the desire of detailed description of fauna.

The menace of man to the wild life has assumed such proportions that the Government has had to step in to provide protection to the mute creatures. As a result certain legislations have been enacted, rules framed and enforced.

The two main statutes administered by the Forest Department for the protection and preservation of wild life in the Bilaspur district, and, for that matter, in all Himachal Pradesh, are the *Indian Forest Act, 1927*, and the rules framed thereunder, for the reserved and the protected forest areas, and the *Punjab Wild Birds and Wild Animals Protection Act II of 1933*, and the rules, made thereunder for non-forest areas.

In the areas other than the reserved and the protected forests i.e., in the privately owned lands, including grassland, and in the forests in private ownership, assessed to land revenue payable by the land-owner, the protection of wild life is secured under the *Punjab Wild Birds and Wild Animals Protection Act II of 1933*, and rules framed thereunder by the Himachal Pradesh Government.

Besides, what has been stated above there are a number of general restrictions codified in rules, which a sportsman must observe in order to save himself from punishment which an infringement of the rules entails.

A game sanctuary at Naina Devi has been established for the protection of wild life.

## CLIMATE

The climate of this district is generally temperate compared to the plains of the Punjab although the heat in summer is sometimes trying. The terrain is mountainous particularly in the portion to the south-west of the Satluj. The portion to the north and west of the Satluj is slightly hilly with elevations generally between 500 and 700 metres with some well-defined

ridges going up to higher elevations. The year may be divided into four seasons. The summer is from March to about the end of June. The south-west monsoon starts thereafter and lasts till about the third week of September. October and November constitute the post-monsoon season and the period from December to February is the cold season.

### **Rainfall and observatories**

Records of rainfall are meagre. The average annual rainfall at Bilaspur is 1373.7 m. From the distribution of rainfall in the region surrounding the district for which some data are available it is seen that, in general, rainfall in the district increases from the south-west to the north-east. July is the month with the heaviest rainfall. But on account of the nature of the terrain, there may be sharp contrasts in the amount of rainfall at stations within a distance of a few kilometres only from each other. About seventy per cent of the annual rainfall is received in the south-west monsoon season, July to September. During the winter season also there is some rainfall mostly in association with passing western disturbances. In the pre-monsoon month of June, and in October some rainfall in the form of thunder showers occurs. The variation in the rainfall from year to year is not large. On an average there are seventy rainy days (i. e. days with rainfall of 2.5 mm or more) in a year. The heaviest rainfall recorded in twenty-four hours at Bilaspur in the short period of seven years for which data are available was 203.2 mm on September 26, 1954.

### **Temperature**

There is only one meteorological observatory located at Bilaspur. The meteorological data for this station are available only for about five years. The available records at Bilaspur may be taken to be broadly representative of the climatic conditions in the district as a whole, except for regions of higher elevations where the temperature would generally be less than that at Bilaspur. From about the beginning of March temperatures begin to rise steadily till June which is usually the hottest month of the year with the mean daily maximum temperature at  $38.1^{\circ}\text{C}$  and the mean daily minimum at  $23.5^{\circ}\text{C}$ . With the advance of the monsoon over the district by about the beginning of July the day temperatures drop appreciably while the night temperatures continue to be as in the June. After about the middle of September temperatures begin to decrease, the fall in night temperatures being more rapid than that in day temperature. January is the coldest part of the year with the mean daily maximum temperature at  $19.3^{\circ}\text{C}$  and the mean daily minimum at  $5.6^{\circ}\text{C}$ . In the cold season, December to February, during cold waves, which effect the district in the wake of passing western disturbances, the minimum temperature may go down to about the freezing point of water and frosts may occur.

The highest maximum temperature recorded at Bilaspur during the five years 1956 to 1960 for which data are available was  $44.2^{\circ}\text{C}$  on June 17, 1958 and the lowest minimum was  $0.0^{\circ}\text{C}$  on December 20, 1960.

### **Humidity**

In the south-west monsoon season the humidities are high. In the rest of the year the air is comparatively drier. But in the post-monsoon and winter months the relative humidities in the early mornings are high. In the summer particularly in the afternoons the humidity is low.

### **Atmospheric pressure and winds**

**Cloudiness :** Skies are clear or lightly clouded in the summer and post-monsoon season. Heavily clouded to overcast skies prevail in the monsoon season. In association with western disturbances which effect the district, spells of cloudy weather occur during the winter season.

**Winds :** Winds are generally light throughout the year. In the monsoon season winds are easterly or south-easterly. During the rest of the year winds are mainly from the north or north-west.

**Special weather phenomena :** Thunderstorms occur in all the months, being least during November and December and highest in summer and monsoon months. Occasional hail occurs in the summer months. Fog is common in the post-monsoon and winter season.

Tables 2,3 and 4 at the end of this chapter give the temperature and humidity, mean wind speed and frequency of special weather phenomena respectively for Bilaspur proper.

**TABLE I**  
**Normals of rainfall\***  
**(Bilaspur)**

| Month     | Normal rainfall<br>(mm) | Average number of rainy<br>days (days with rain of<br>2.5 mm or more) |
|-----------|-------------------------|---|
| January   | 66.3                    | 5.3   |
| February  | 19.6                    | 1.6   |
| March     | 69.6                    | 4.3   |
| April     | 14.5                    | 1.3   |
| May       | 19.1                    | 2.3   |
| June      | 101.3                   | 6.3   |
| July      | 414.5                   | 15.6  |
| August    | 306.1                   | 14.7  |
| September | 223.3                   | 11.2  |
| October   | 103.6                   | 4.0   |
| November  | 8.4                     | 0.3   |
| December  | 27.4                    | 2.6   |
| Annual    | 1373.7                  | 69.5  |

\* Based on data of seven years.

TABLE 2  
Normals of temperatures and relative humidity  
(Bilaspur)

| Month.    | Mean daily maximum temperature | Mean daily minimum temperature | Highest maximum ever recorded | Lowest minimum ever recorded | Relative humidity 0830 1730* |
|-----------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
|           | oC                             | oC                             | oC                            | oC                           | Date                         |
| January   | 19.3                           | 5.6                            | 24.9                          | 0.3                          | 23 96 58                     |
| February  | 21.8                           | 5.9                            | 28.9                          | 0.8                          | 11 89 42                     |
| March     | 27.1                           | 10.4                           | 33.9                          | 5.4                          | 7 76 38                      |
| April     | 32.8                           | 15.4                           | 40.7                          | 8.8                          | 2 53 24                      |
| May       | 37.1                           | 19.9                           | 42.2                          | 13.5                         | 12 43 27                     |
| June      | 38.1                           | 23.5                           | 44.2                          | 16.7                         | 2 52 35                      |
| July      | 32.6                           | 24.1                           | 41.8                          | 21.3                         | 9 83 67                      |
| August    | 31.7                           | 23.5                           | 35.4                          | 20.0                         | 1 87 70                      |
| September | 31.0                           | 21.8                           | 35.4                          | 16.1                         | 23 89 67                     |
| October   | 29.3                           | 15.7                           | 23.3                          | 9.7                          | 31 80 53                     |
| November  | 25.4                           | 8.7                            | 30.3                          | 3.1                          | 27 95 49                     |
| December  | 21.6                           | 5.5                            | 26.5                          | 0.0                          | 20 95 58                     |
| Annual    | 29.0                           | 15.0                           |                               |                              | 79 48                        |

\*Hours I. S. T.

**TABLE 3**  
**Mean wind speed in km/hr**  
**(Bilaspur)**

|     | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | June | July | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Annual |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|--------|
| 2.7 | 3.1 | 5.1 | 5.5 | 6.9 | 6.1 | 4.6  | 3.9  | 3.4 | 2.9 | 2.3 | 2.7 | 2.7 | 4.1    |

**TABLE 4**  
**Special weather phenomena**  
**(Bilaspur)**

| Mean No. of<br>days with | Jan  | Feb  | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct  | Nov  | Dec  | Annual |
|--------------------------|------|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|------|------|--------|
| Thunder                  | 2.4  | 1.6  | 6.4 | 5.0 | 6.3 | 7.3 | 8.7 | 9.0 | 6.3 | 2.7  | 1.0  | 1.0  | 57.7   |
| Hail                     | 0.2  | 0.0  | 1.2 | 0.4 | 0.3 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0  | 0.0  | 0.0  | 2.1    |
| Dust-storm               | 0.0  | 0.0  | 0.2 | 0.4 | 0.7 | 0.5 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0  | 0.0  | 0.0  | 1.8    |
| Squall                   | 0.0  | 0.0  | 0.6 | 0.4 | 0.0 | 2.0 | 0.0 | 0.3 | 0.0 | 0.0  | 0.0  | 0.0  | 3.3    |
| Fog                      | 17.0 | 11.2 | 1.4 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.7 | 3.3 | 10.7 | 12.3 | 14.6 | 71.2   |



# Chapter II

## HISTORY

### PRE-HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY

The area comprising Bilaspur district has never, in the past, been brought within the fold of archaeological survey and even upto now it is an untrodden ground by an archaeologist. Nothing can, therefore, be said with certainty as to how far the tract is or is not important from archaeological point of view.

#### Archaeology

There are, however, certain forts, temples, notable buildings and sites which, though not of very ancient origin, may be regarded as objects of archaeological interests and as such deserve some description. There is no authoritative version available about their historical and architectural importance.

#### History

The monuments are only slender source of history of this district. Not a trace has so far been found of any ancient coin that may shed light on the history of this area. Traditions and folklore have not yet received any attention that could render help for building up the past history. "The only authority for the history of the State", says the author of the *History of the Punjab Hill States*, "seems to be the *Shashi Bansa Binod*, compiled from ancient records by Kavi Ganesh Singh, and published in 1882. It is in old Hindi verse, and contains many interesting details in addition to the genealogical roll of the rajas".

The *Twarikh-i-Rajputana Mulk-i-Panjab* by Thakur Kahn Singh, Balaurea, also contains a history of the State.

The *Binod* gives a detailed chronological record for each reign from 697 AD (754 Bk) down almost to the present time. It is certain, however,

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\*Hutchison A.N., *History of the Punjab Hill States* (1933)

that the State was founded at somewhat later date than that claimed for it in the *Binod*. It is known that Suket and Keonthal, which were founded by two brothers, are older than Bilaspur, and this is admitted in the *Binod*. There are unfortunately few chronological data available on which to form a definite conclusion, but Suket was founded not later than A. D. 770, and there have been fifty rajas against forty four in Bilaspur. Allowing twenty-two years to a reign it may be concluded that the State was founded about A.D. 900. The rajas of Bilaspur, however, seem to have been a long-lived race and that an earlier date could perhaps be assigned for the foundation of the State. The dates in the *Binod* seem approximately reliable after A.D. 1300.

In the *Binod* the following couplet occurs, referring to the conquests of Bir Chand, the founder of Bilaspur State :—

*Pahla Baghal jite Kunihar thakurai,*

*Beja, Dhami markar Keonthal pai dai.*

“Having conquered Baghal, Kunihar, Beja and Dhami, an advance was made against Keonthal”.

From this it is evident that Suket and Keonthal must be older than Bilaspur. The other States mentioned belong to the Barah *Thakuraian*, called Simla Hill States, one of which was Keonthal ; originally twelve but later twenty in number.

Previous to the foundation of the State, the territory was under the rule of petty Ranas and Thakurs, as were the conditions elsewhere in the hills before the advent of the class, called Rajas. The diminutive area of difference were constantly at feud among themselves, and thus fell an easy prey to a superior force who styled himself as Raja. It was in this manner that Bilaspur, and all the larger hill States of the later time, were founded.

#### **Raja Bir Chand (c.A.D. 900)**

The founder of Bilaspur State was Raja Bir Chand a cadet of the Chandel Rajput family, then ruling Chanderi in Bandelkhand. The ruler of Chanderi at that time was Harihar Chand who had five sons, named, Gobind Chand, Bir Chand, Gambir Chand, Kabir Chand and Sabir Chand. Gambir Chand founded Chanehni State and Kabir Chand a State in Kumaun. Leaving his ancestral kingdom in the possession of his eldest son Gobind Chand he travelled north, with his other sons and an army, into the Punjab, being super-naturally guided, as stated in *Binod*, by the goddess of flame at Jwalamukhi in Kangra. After reaching the hills they conquered a place called Jhandbhari, now in, Hoshiarpur, and having built a fort settled there for a time. They then went on to Jwalamukhi to pay

their homage at the shrine. Nadaun being near, a visit was paid to the raja of Kangra, then resident there. When engaged in the game of tent-pegging during the visit, the youngest of the brothers, named Sabir Chand, was thrown from his horse and killed. This was attributed to treachery on the part of the Kangra raja, and led to an encounter in which he and Harihar Chand were both killed. Bir Chand then assumed command of the force and retired to the Satluj valley, where he conquered a territory from the local rulers and settled on the left bank. A varied version of this legend is as follows —

The pilgrim party of Harihar Chand with his four sons was met by the raja of Kangra at Nadaun and at the retinues of the two chiefs held a friendly tournament, in which the southern knights were successful. The raja thereupon arranged a tent-pegging contest for the following day, and promised his daughter to the man who succeeded in taking a certain peg. This peg was in reality the trunk of a tree. Sabir Chand, the youngest son of the Chanderi kingdom, entered the lists, promising the bride to his elder brother Bir Chand. The day broke inauspiciously and a terrific storm raged. Sabir Chand losing control of his horse was killed, and the deception practised by the Kangra chief was discovered. A battle ensued, and the Kangra forces were defeated. The Kangra Tikka and Harihar Chand were both among the slain.

Bir Chand, Kabir Chand and Gambir Chand, the surviving princes, retreated to the shrine of Jwalamukhi, where the presiding goddess, in reply to long and earnest supplication, promised each of them a kingdom. In fulfilment of her prophecy, Kabir Chand wandered to Kumaon, and was adopted by the raja of that State; Gambir Chand second son of Harihar Chand, the founder of the ruling dynasty of Bilaspur, took possession of Chamba; and Bir Chand the eldest, seized Jhandbari now in Hoshiarpur district. Inspired by a dream vouchsafed by Naina Devi in whose service he had raised a shrine Bir Chand gradually evicted the local Thakurs, called Ruhnds, and carved out for himself the kingdom of Kahlur. He waged many wars during his reign of thirty-three years, and subjugated no fewer than fifteen neighbouring States. But he was ultimately checked by the raja of Sirmur, with whom he was glad to make peace and agreed to a boundary between the kingdoms.

Yet another story is as follows. The Raja of Bilaspur is descended from Argok, a raja whose territory was situated in the Deccan. Harihar Chand, a descendant of Argok in the fourteenth generation, came on a pilgrimage to Jwalamukhi, a sacred place in the Kangra district, saw Jhandbari, now in the Hoshiarpur district, in the course of his journey, and attracted by the place conquered and settled down in it. One of Harihar Chand's sons conquered and took possession of the Chamba State, another

carved out a principality for himself in Kanidon, while, Bir Chand, founded the State of Bilaspur.

Being guided by some celestial signs to a site for his capital he built a temple to Goddess Naina Devi on one of the seven Dhars, now called Dhar Naina Devi and below it he founded his capital, also called Naina Devi Town.

The local petty chiefs were then subjugated. He also humbled the other chiefs of Baghal, Kunihar, Beja, Dhami, Keonthal, Kothar, Jubbal, Baghat, Bhajji, Mahlog, Mangal and Balson. Tributes were imposed upon them, and were also under obligation to render feudal service when summoned as also to attend ceremonies at which they offered *nazars* at the yearly *Sairi* or Autumn *Jalsa* in *Asuj*. The yearly tribute amounted to Rs. 7,800, it is said, was paid until the beginning of British rule in 1815. With the aid of the Ranas and Thakurs, Bir Chand invaded Sirmur and annexed a portion of that State and fixed the boundary at Gorakhgarh. He also took one pargana from Handur, then under older rulers, and fixed his boundary at Manaswari in Dun. The Satluj was also crossed and a portion of territory annexed on the right bank called Dharkot.

Bir Chand, founder of the State, was followed in succession by Udhran Chand, Jaskarn Chand, Madanbrahm Chand, and Ahl Chand. Except their names nothing much happened during their rule as to merit mention.

#### **Raja Kahal Chand**

He was the sixth descendant of the ruling race of the then Kahlur State and is said to have built the Kot Kahlur after which the state subsequently derived its name. But this incident attributed to Kahal Chand would seem to be of dubious accuracy because, according to another version, already narrated, the construction of this ancient citadel is attributed to Raja Bir Chand the founder of the ruling race. It is possible that Kahal Chand may have either repaired or made addition to this fort.

Kahal Chand was succeeded by Slar Chand, Men Chand, Sen Chand and Sul Khan Chand whose names only are known. Kahan Chand, the twelfth raja of this dynasty then succeeded the throne and is known more as the father of one of his renowned sons, namely, Ajit Chand, than for any of his own qualities.

#### **Raja Ajit Chand**

Kahal Chand, the previous raja, had three or perhaps four sons, named, Ajit Chand, Ajai Chand, Tegh Chand and Suchet Chand. On their fath-

er's death they attacked and dispossessed the neighbouring brahmin Thakur, Handu, the ruler of Handur of his Kingdom.

### **Founding of Handur State**

Ajit Chand, it is said, was installed there and founded the ruling dynasty of Handur, later on known as Nalagarh after the name of its capital. Yet another story is that Ajit Chand conquered Nalagarh and gave it to his brother Suchet Chand, from whom the ruling family of Nalagarh is descended. Ajit Chand succeeded his father. He and Ajai Chand had different mothers and it is sometimes said that Ajit Chand was the elder of the two. According to an account given in the old Nalagarh Gazetteer, the brothers spent the later portion of their lives at war with one another.

After Ajit Chand, the royal race was continued by Gokal Chand, Udai Chand, Gen Chand, and Prithvi Chand. No details beyond their names, indicating the continuity of the ruling line, are available.

### **Raja Sangar Chand (c.A.D. 1197-1220)**

After seven of his sons are descended seven different Rajput families namely, Darol, Jhandwal, Sangwal, Ghal, Nanglu, Meghori and Dohkli. These Main families are still extant holding jagirs.

### **Raja Megh Chand**

Megh Chand, the eldest son of the last named raja, succeeded to the gadi. Being of a harsh and tyrannical disposition, the people bore with him for a time, and then turned against him and forced him to leave the State. He retired to Kulu along with some of his servants, and was kindly received by the raja. One of his kinsmen, called Mal Darol, went to Delhi to lay a complaint before the Sultan, (presumably Shams-ud-din Altamash 1211-1236 A.D.) and he sent an order to restore Megh Chand, with a force in support. The raja was, therefore, recalled from Kulu and resumed his position after some fighting. On his return the zamindars of Deleg were the first to come forward and present their *nazar*. In recognition of this loyalty they enjoyed till the merger of State, the special privilege of presenting their *nazars* first of all preceding others at the Sairi Jalsa or Durbar, followed by the officials and all other subjects of the State. For his fidelity Mian Mal Darol was appointed wazir and a Jagir was granted to him.

Megh Chand was followed in succession by Raja Dev Chand and Alim Chand during whose reign nothing of importance happened.

### **Raja Abhisand Chand**

This raja, twenty-first in the royal line, is said to have ruled during the reign of Sikandar Lodhi. Once on the plains near Anandpur he fell in

with an Amir, named, Tatar Khan, on his way to Lahore, with a large force. The butchers in the Amir's army had seized some cattle, and were about to slaughter them for food, when the raja ordered his men to kill the butchers and rescue the cattle. This was done, and on hearing of it the Amir pursued the raja's force into the hills, and laid seige to Kot Kahlur. A battle lasted for several days. Being unable to capture it, a strong elephant was brought to burst open the door, and the raja severed its trunk with a stroke of his sword and killed the Amir and defeated his army. His son, hearing of his father's death, came with an army pretending friendship, and was invited to the fort. The raja and his youngest son, Sunder Chand, went to the camp to pay a return visit. They were persuaded to lay aside their arms and were then treacherously killed. The bodies were recovered after some fighting and cremated-the rani becoming Sati.

#### **Raja Sampuran Chand (c.A.D. 1380)**

Sampuran Chand then succeeded but had only a short reign. Strong ill-feeling existed between him and his brother, Ratan Chand, ending in a quarrel in which the raja was killed.

#### **Raja Ratan Chand (c.A.D. 1400)**

Raja Rattan Chand had a long reign. He had more cordial relations, with the Court at Delhi, for it is said he was invited to Delhi by the Sultan, whose name has not been mentioned, and distinguished himself by slaying a lion, which was distressing the suburbs of that city. For this feat of bravery he received handsome reward from the Emperor. A sword with which he was presented is still preserved by the ruling family to this generation.

#### **Raja Narinder Chand**

Ratan Chand had two sons Narinder Chand and Mian Mithu. He was succeeded by the former but no details have come down regarding his reign nor of the four subsequent successors, namely, Fateh Chand, Pahar Chand, Ram Chand and Uttam Chand.

#### **Raja Gyan Chand or Ayam Chand (c.A.D. 1570)**

Gyan Chand who followed is said to have been a contemporary of Akbar (1556-1586 A.D.) and it may be assumed that in his reign or about his time Bilaspur, like all the other hill States, became subject and tributary to the Mughal Empire. No reference to the State, however, occurs in any of the Muhammedan histories of the time.

Gyan Chand was of a different nature and his overbearing attitude towards the smaller States aroused their antipathy against him. A complaint

was made to the Viceroy at Sirhind, who sent a force and had the raja arrested and brought into his presence. The Viceroy was so impressed with his fine appearance that he persuaded him to embrace Islam and gave his own daughter in marriage. His descendents are now said to be the only land owning Mussulmans in the district. Gyan Chand's tomb is still shown at Kirtpur, in Punjab.

Gyan Chand had three sons—Bik Chand, Rama and Bhima—the two younger sons also embraced Islam with the large number of the people. The heir-apparent, Bik Chand, however, remained under the Hindu faith, and on his father's return, fled across the Satluj to a place called Sunhani, where he settled. Later, he went to Kangra where he was kindly welcomed by Raja Trilok Chand (A.D. 1600-12) who gave his daughter in marriage. The rani, however, was of very forceful disposition, and did not hide her dislike for her husband. This was keenly resented by him, and through the wazir of Kangra he had the following question put to her father. "If your shoe pinches what be done? To this raja answered, "Cut it to make it fit properly." Bik Chand took the hint and severely chastised the rani. Then fearing the consequences, he mounted a swift horse and fled to Kahlur. An army was sent in his pursuit, but failed to arrest him, and he settled in his own home at Sunhani. Later he made it up with the raja of Kangra. Bik Chand succeeded Gyan Chand who died after a long reign.

#### **Raja Bik Chand or Bikram Chand (c.A.D. 1600)**

On his accession, about 1600, Bik Chand went to Kot Kahlur, perhaps for his installation, leaving his two ranis, who were both *enceinte*, at Sunhani. One of these was from Kangra and the other from Baghal. A son was born to the Kangra rani, but she delayed communication of the news to the raja, with the result that the news of the other rani's son, having been born almost at the same time preceded. On learning about this delay the Kangra rani at once claimed priority for her son, which on full inquiry, acknowledged to have been born a little earlier and was therefore, recognised as Tika or heir-apparent. His name was Sultan Chand and that of the other, Kesba Chand. Bik Chand had a long reign, and his sons grew upto manhood with strong antagonistic feeling against each other, owing probably to both claiming the gadi. According to a different version Bik Chand, during his life time, abdicated in favour of his son Sultan Chand, who had in his turn to fight for kingdom with his own half-brothers.

#### **Raja Sultan Chand (c.A.D. 1620)**

Sultan Chand was installed at Raja Bik Chand's demise; but a few years later the ill-feeling between the brothers came to a head in a fierce encounter in which both the young princes were killed. Sultan Chand left a son, named, Kalian Chand who succeeded.

**Raja Kalian Chand (c.A.D. 1630)**

Kalian Chand was a contemporary of Raja Shiam sen of Suket (A.D. 1620-53) whose daughter was his chief rani. It may, therefore, be assumed that he came into power about A.D. 1630.

He built a fort on the borders of Handur which caused hostile feelings and ultimately led to war between the two States. The raja of Handur was killed, leaving an infant son. To avoid harm to the State the rani took a bold step of throwing herself on Kalian Chand's protection, being a near relative, and entrusted the young prince to his care. Kalian Chand accepted the charge, installed the infant in the gadi and acted as his guardian in the management of the State till he came of age.

Towards the end of Kalian Chand's reign an unfortunate event occurred which brought disaster on himself and the State. Bilaspur and Suket were not on friendly terms, and the Suket rani was jealous of her father's honour. While she and the raja were one day engaged in playing a game of chess, a hill bird was heard singing Kalian Chand's praises, in the course of which he was called 'the lord of seven *'dhars'*'. On being told the names of these *dhars* the rani remarked that one of them was her father's. This so enraged the raja that he struck her on the head with the chess-board and drew blood, to warn him of coming trouble. War broke out soon afterwards, and, in a battle, that was fought at Mahadeo, Kalian Chand's horse under him, was shot. On asking a horse from a Sanghwal Mian, a kinsman of his own, his request was refused, and he was overtaken and mortally wounded, and died on the way to Bilaspur. The spot is still called '*Kalian Chand-di-dwari*' (cave of Kalian Chand). The Suketi rani became sati. On account of the disloyal action of their ancestor, no member of the Sanghwal family was, during the princely regime, permitted the use of a horse from the state.

**Raja Tara Chand (c.A.D. 1645)**

Kalian Chand had eight sons. Tara Chand, the eldest, succeeded, but was of a weak and timid disposition and paid little attention to State affairs. As a result inroads were made into the country, and much territory was lost to neighbouring States. The tributary states also ceased to give attendance and other '*nazars*'. He attempted to avenge his father but with only partial success. Taragarh fort in Handur, now demolished, was built by him.

**Raja Dip Chand (c.A.D. 1650-1656)**

Dip Chand succeeded about A.D. 1650 and did much to restore the prestige of the State. He was of a religious bent of mind. Most of the territory lost in the previous reign was recovered and the smaller ranas who had



broken away from the State control, were reduced to subjection.

The residence of the ruling family had continued to be at Sunhani, from the time of Bik Chand. Dip Chand developed a strong dislike for the place, and determined on making a change. Accompanied by the faquirs, his advisers two Hindus and two Muhammadens he, therefore, sought a new site for the capital, and finally fixed upon a place on the left bank of the Satluj, traditionally called Vyāṣṭi. There he erected a palace, called Dholra, overlooking the river, and founded a town on the river bank, and called it Biaspur, now Bilaspur.

A difficulty arose regarding the use of the *Jai Deva* as the Mians, or royal kinsmen, claimed to be saluted as such on an equality with the raja. Dip Chand passed an order that in future the *Jai Deva* should be offered only when wishing the raja and *Jai* to the Mians. Refusal to obey was made an offence involving forfeiture of their jagirs. All the Mians agreed to comply. At the same time the salutation of *Ram-Ram* was fixed for the ranas.

Mughal emperors of Delhi would seem to have authority on the raja of Bilaspur. Dip Chand is said to have been sent on an expedition to the north-west frontier with his contingent by Aurangzeb, and so distinguished himself that on his return he received a present of five lakhs of rupees, and a sanad authorising his suzerainty over no less than twenty-two States including Kulu, Kangra, Kuthi, Mandi, Suket and Chamba. This event does not find mention in the annals of other states.

About 1656 the Sikhs, then rising into power, invaded Bilaspur and reduced it to submission. Soon afterwards the raja, on his way home from the imperial army, visited Nadaun where he was welcomed by the raja of Kangra, with all honour but, at the dinner, poison was administered to him and, though warned by one of his servants, he ate of the food and died.

#### **Raja Bhim Chand (c.A.D. 1667)**

Dip Chand's death was a serious loss to the State as his son was only a child. The Mians, whose influence on the subsequent history of the State has been at times so turbulent, seen first to have arisen to power during the reign of Dip Chand. On his death they claimed the throne for one of their own member, Manak Chand. Manak Chand, brother of the late raja, was appointed wazir, but proved tyrannical and imprisoned the old officials. On hearing this, Jalal Devi, the queen-mother had him expelled from the State and released the officials. Manak Chand went to the raja of Kangra and tried to persuade him to invade Kahlur and annex the State. He, however, declined without the permission of the Mughal Viceroy at Sirhind. They, thereafter, both went to Sirhind, and by misrepresentation induced

the viceroy to send an army to invade Kahlur. Bhim Chand, who was then fourteen years old, appealed to Handur and the Barah Thakurain for help and repelled the invasion. Annals of Mandi throw further light on this incident. It is related Sidh Sen met Raja Bhim Chand of Bilaspur at Jaboth (near Bhambla about forty kilometres from Mandi) and their combined forces attacked Katoch territory and sacked and then burnt the towers of Nai Singapur and Bijapur now in Palampur tahsil.

Bhim Chand was then called upon for help by his relative, the raja of Kulu, whose territory was invaded by Bushahr. He advanced as far as Nirmand, capturing several forts and expelling the invaders, and restored the lost territory to Kulu. In this expedition he gained a single victory over the combined forces, an exploit of which was the first of a brilliant series of successes in the field of arms. He defeated the rajas of Bushahr, Mandi and Kotkhai.

At a later time in Bhim Chand's reign there were other wars with the Sikhs who were then beginning to make inroads into the hills. Guru Gobind Singh in his early years resided much in the outer hills, bordering on the plains, and rendered assistance to the hill chiefs in resisting the exaction by the Mughal governors of Kangra fort. The raja in alliance with Guru Gobind Singh defied the Imperial authorities at Kangra and overcame Alif Khan, the Governor in the battle of Nadaun. As the Sikhs gained power, they began to encroach on the hill States, causing apprehension among the rajas, that they might be expelled from their territories. In 1682 Guru Gobind Singh was in Bilaspur State, and trouble arose between him and Bhim Chand, in which the latter was defeated and lost many men. This defeat rankled in the raja's mind, and in 1685 he leagued himself with Guler, Kangra and other States, and again attacked the Sikhs, but again fared badly. Dispute again arose in 1700 and Raja Bhim Chand and Alam Chand of Kangra attacked the Sikhs, only to be completely routed. Not content even then, an attack was made on Anandpur with a large army, but they failed to take it and were dispersed. Yet, after all these encounters, the Guru, in 1701 concluded peace with Bhim Chand once more, notwithstanding the fact that he had been the leader of the confederacy against the Sikhs.

The chronicle then records an incident in the family which had sad consequences. Dip Chand left two widow ranis of whom Jalal Devi was Bhim Chand's mother, and Kunkam Devi had one daughter. Some of the officials, for some reason, sought to stir up bad feeling between them, and fabricated a report that Jalal Devi wanted to arrange the marriage of Kunkam Devi's daughter to her brother, the raja of Mandi, and that Bhim Chand had expressed the approval. Kunkam Devi was opposed to the marriage, and,

not knowing that it was a false statement, she set fire to her house in which she and her daughter perished in the flames. Both the raja and Jalal Devi were much distressed by this occurrence and to expiate the sin a temple was built, containing the likeness of the deceased rani, and a 'sada-brat' started. The closing years of his life he spent as a faquir after abdicating in favour of his son. He died about 1712, and was succeeded by his son, Ajmer Chand.

#### **Raja Ajmer Chand (c.A.D. 1712-1741)**

Ajmer Chand, the next raja who had a peaceful reign of long duration, was of a religious temperament and frequented the temples, engaging much in puja. One day while thus engaged, he accidentally dropped an image on the ground and in expiation for this act, and for dread of the consequences, he subjected himself to corporal punishment and a fine of fifty thousand rupees, which was given to the poor.

He married in Garhwal, Simur and the thakurain, and had seven sons, of whom the eldest was Devi Chand. He built a fort called Ajmergarh on the borders of Handur. The death closed his earthly career in 1741.

#### **Raja Devi Chand (1741)**

Soon after his succession a revolt took place in the adjoining State of Handur, and Raja Man Chand and his son were both killed. The people then approached Devi Chand and invited him to take over the State. This however, he declined to do, and installed Gaje Singh Handurea, a member of the Handur ruling family, as raja from whom descended the future raja of Nalagarh.

At a later date Abhai Chand of Jaswan invaded Kangra, and Devi Chand went to help of Raja Ghamand Chand. This must have been later than 1751. At a still later time Abhai Chand of Jaswan was expelled by his brother, Jagrup Chand, and Devi Chand restored him to his State.

He also recovered the State territory that had been annexed by the Mughals, and when the Nawab of Jullundur, Adina Beg Khan, showed displeasure, the raja sent his wazir to arrange the matter, in which he was successful.

During Devi Chand's reign the State prospered so much that the 'chung'i' (octroi) dues in the town amounted to twenty thousand rupees and many people from the plains came and settled in the State. Devi Chand, introduced the payment of cash tribute by his feudatories and of these the Banswara gives the following lists ;—

|                      |                |              |
|----------------------|----------------|--------------|
| 1. Rana of Baghal,   | Annual tribute | Rs. 1,000.00 |
| 2. Raja of Bhagat,   | —do—           | Rs. 1,000.00 |
| 3. Rana of Keonthal, | —do—           | Rs. 3,000.00 |
| 4. Thakur of Beja,   | —do—           | Rs. 100.00   |
| 5. Thakur of Mangal, | —do—           | Rs. 100.00   |
| 6. Rana of Bhajji,   | —do—           | Rs. 700.00   |
| 7. Rana of Mahlog,   | —do—           | Rs. 700.00   |
| 8. Rana of Dhami,    | —do—           | Rs. 300.00   |
| 9. Rana of Kuthar,   | —do—           | Rs. 100.00   |
| 10. Rana of Kutlehr, | —do—           | Rs. 300.00   |
| 11. Rana of Kunihar, | —do—           | Rs. 100.00   |
| 12. Rana of Balson,  | —do—           | Rs. 200.00   |
| 13. Rana of Mehra,   | —do—           | Rs. 200.00   |

The same authority states that all these principalities became independent in 1790 with the exception of Mangal. Devi Chand was a contemporary of Nadir Shah and coming into collision with his forces, was taken prisoner, but was subsequently released on payment of ransom.

In 1762 the Satluj was blocked in Bhajji State for forty-two days by a large landslide, and a great part of Bilaspur was flooded. To save his State from the flood on the bursting of the dam, the raja posted men, each with a gun a kos apart, from Bhajji to Rupar, with orders to fire all along the line when the dam burst in order to give warning.

Devi Chand built the fort of Bhamaikot and gave the Rumgarh Fort to Bejai Chand of Handur. Devi Chand was married to a Katoch princess, and late in life had a son, named Mahan Chand, born in 1772, who was six years old at the time of his father's death.

#### **Raja Mahan Chand (A.D. 1778-1824)**

Mahan Chand being a minor the administration remained in the hands of Ramu of the Darol family and other officers, in association with the rani.

The last of the Mughal Kiladars still held the Kangra fort, and in 1781 it was besieged by the Sikhs under Jai Singh Kanheva, along with Raja

Sansar Chand of Kangra. Saif Ali Khan had appealed to the rani of Bilaspur for help which was readily given, owing probably to encroachments on the State by the Kangra chief.

In March 1783 Forster, the traveller, passed through Bilaspur in the disguise of a Muhammedan merchant, on his way from Nahan to Jammu and Kashmir. He tells little of Bilaspur itself, but his reference to the siege, and the part the rani was playing, is of much interest. He states, "On my arrival at Belaspour, I found the Ranee engaged in a war with the chief of Kangrah on the limits of whose country her army was then encamped. It may not edify or perhaps entertain you to know the cause of this fell dispute, which however, had taken such possession of the minds of the mountaineers, and to them was so important an event, that they seemed to think the hills and forests of Bellaspur the seat of universal war. The siege of Troy, and the conflicts on the Scanander, would have appeared as mere skirmishes to these sylvan heroes; and they probably would have allowed no other degree of comparison, than that women were the cause of them both. But as I myself became involuntarily interested in their story, and having little other matter to communicate, I am induced to intrude a sketch of it on your patience."

"To deduce this eventful matter above, I must call your attention to the Days of Acbar, who is said to have been the first Mohometan prince who reduced the northern mountains of Hindostan to the obedience of the empire. Towards the northern limit of Kalour, is a strong hold on an eminence, called the Kote Kangrah, the reduction of which detained Acbar, who commanded the expedition in person, a whole year, according to the tradition of this quarter. To reward one of his officers who had signalized himself in this service, he bestowed on him the captured fort, with a considerable space of adjacent territory. The descendants of this chief who are of the Sheah's sect of Mahometans, continued in the possession until the present period, when the Rajah of Kangrah, on some pretence, laid the districts waste, and besieged the fort. Unable himself to repel the Enemy, the Mohometan solicited the aid of the Bellaspour Ranee, who with the spirit of a heroine, afforded speedy and vigorous succour to her neighbour, whose cause she has already revenged by plundering and destroying almost every village of Kangrah; the chief of which now vainly asserts, that the Ranee, seeing his country destitute of defence, seized, under the colour of assisting her ally, the occasion of augmenting her own power."

The fort was surrendered to the Sikhs soon afterwards, and came into Sansar Chand's hands in 1786 and he forgot to repay in kind the part the rani had played in the war, and the trouble she had given him.

Ramu, the wazir, died in 1785 and on the withdrawal of his conciliatory influence some differences arose between the rani and the other officials. She called in Bairagi Ram, who had formerly been wazir of Mandi, and appointed him to the vacant post. He, however, only made matters worse by committing the old officials to prison and oppressing the people, so they rose against him and killed him. Zorawar Chand, younger brother of Raja Devi Chand, was then appointed wazir and held office till Mahan Chand came of age.

On obtaining full power the raja showed no interest in State affairs, and spent his time in sensual pleasures and low company. This alienated from him the loyalty of his subjects and brought disaster upon the State.

Raja Sansar Chand, of Kangra in 1795 invaded the territory on the right bank of the Satluj and occupied Chauki Hatwat. Being unable to oppose him alone, the rani sent to Dharam Parkash, raja of Sirmur, offering fifty thousand rupees for assistance, and an army came in response. Fighting ensued in which the Kahlur forces were defeated and Dharam Parkash was killed. Sansar Chand then occupied all the territory on the right bank of (parganas Ajmerpur and Sunhani) and built a fort on Dhar Janjar in Bilaspur territory and called it Chhatipur i.e. a fort on the chest of Bilaspur.

The rani probably, died soon after this war. These losses made no impression on Mahan Chand, who continued to spend his time as before, refusing to listen to his officials. Seeing this the ranas of Barah Thakurain renounced their allegiance. Raja Ram Chand (Sariun) of Nalagarh, his own kinsmen, forsook him and allied himself with Sansar Chand. He also invaded the territory, burnt Bilaspur and captured the forts of Fatehpur, Bahadurpur and Ratanpur and annexed the portion of Kahlur territory viz. entire parganas of Bahadurpur and Ratanpur adjoining his own State. Mahan Chand at last became alarmed and sent to the Sikh Sardars, Gurdit Singh and Desa Singh, residing at Anandpur, for help. They came but again defeat followed, and the Sardars were killed. In 1808 Maharaja Ranjit Singh annexed Hathawat, Jhanbhari and Dharkot. Pargana Hathawat was lost to Bilaspur for ever.

In the late years of the eighteenth century the Gurkhas of Nepal were seized with the desire to enlarge their borders, and had conquered the hill tracts as far west as the Satluj by 1802. Their headquarters were at Garhwal. In his great anxiety Mahan Chand turned to them for help, by sending an invitation to Amar Singh Thapa, the Gurkha Commander, to invade Kangra. In this he was supported by other chiefs of the Kangra State against Raja Sansar Chand, each of whom promised a contingent. This invitation was eagerly accepted by the Gurkhas being in full accord with their own designs, and they crossed the Satluj in the end of 1805 and defeated Sansar

Chand's forces at Mehal Mori. As a result the portion of the State on the right bank annexed by Sansar Chand was restored, and the Gurkhas laid siege to Kangra fort. In 1809 when the siege had lasted four years, Sansar Chand appealed to Ranjit Singh for help and he compelled the Gurkhas to retire across Satluj.

Gurkhas were thus given a footing by Mahan Chand and continued to occupy Bilaspur and the other States till 1814, when the first Nepalese war began, in consequence of their invasion of British territory. In 1815 they were defeated and driven across the Jamna, and in the following year they had to evacuate Kumaon and retire to their old border beyond Ghagra river. A graphic account of war operations in or near about Bilaspur would be availed from the account of \*Fraser. When the war began, the British authorities called upon all the hill chiefs east to the Satluj and in the Thakuraian to send, contingents, promising their restoration to their territories, on the expulsion of the Gurkhas. Almost all of them gave their support, and were conformed in possession of their States at the close of the war. On request for protection by Raja Mahan Chand, General Sir D. Ochterlony granted a sanad in favour of the raja. On the 6th March, 1815, confirming to him the territory on the left bank while the portion on the right bank, restored by the Gurkhas, was held on condition of allegiance and tribute to the Sikhs, being in Sikh territory. He was exempted from payment of any tribute to the British Government. Jhanbhari, annexed by the Sikhs in 1808 was not restored, and is now in Hoshiarpur district.

Mahan Chand's only son, Kharak Chand, was born in 1813 and the astrologer in drawing out his horoscope, found that he had been born under an unlucky star, and would be the cause of great calamity to the state, a prediction fully fulfilled. Mahan Chand was forbidden to see him for twelve years, and the boy was sent to a distant village, called Kalar, to be brought up.

On the expulsion of the Gurkhas the claim of Bilaspur to the suzerainty over the Barah Thakurain was disallowed by the British Government, and they were brought directly under British control.

In 1819 the section of the State on the right bank of the Satluj was invaded by a Sikh force under Desa Singh Majithia, the Nazim or Governor of the Kangra hills, assisted by a contingent from Raja Sansar Chand, and the forts of Pichrota, Nihalgarh and Biholi Devi were captured. The British at that time did not intervene on the right bank of the Satluj where Sikhs were in power. The Sikhs crossed the Satluj at Bilaspur but the British then

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\*Fraser, J. B., *Himala Mountains* (1820)

intervened and the Sikh force retired. It would appear, however, that from that time, if not earlier, that State had to pay tribute to the Sikhs for the territory on the right bank.

<sup>1</sup>Mr. Moorcroft passed through Bilaspur in March 1820 and left an interesting reference to the State. "At Bilaspur, during the three days of our stay, I operated for this complaint upon eighteen cases. The Raja hearing of this and, being indisposed, condescended to visit me and request my assistance. He was very anxious that I should have remained with him, until the effect of my treatment could be fully ascertained, but this was impossible, as it was necessary for me to secure my progress to Kulu whilst the passes were open. I was, therefore, obliged to decline compliance with his solicitations".

In 1823 Raja Mahan Chand, at the end of ten years from the birth of his son, yielded to an overpowering desire to see him, and sent for him. As the full period of twelve years had not expired, this action on the part of the raja was regarded as a bad omen, and his death in the following year (1824), was attributed to his non-compliance with the terms of the warning of the astrologers.

#### **Raja Kharak Chand (1824-1839)**

Kharak Chand's reign marks the darkest page in the history of Bilaspur. From early youth he seems to have fallen under the baneful influence of evil companions and acquired vicious habits that remained with him during his short life. On coming of age and being invested with full power, he moved towards his destiny, as predicted in his horoscope. He took no interest in State affairs, and left the administration entirely in the hands of his officials, spending his time in the pursuit of sensual pleasures, in the company of other like-minded. For some years things seem to have remained quiescent in the state.

<sup>2</sup>Jacquemont, a French, who passed through Bilaspur sometime in 1830 made the following observations in one of his letters. "There I left the king or raja of your favourite village of Bilaspur, a most promising young rogue who amused himself last year by making one of his elephant a crush to death anyone in his wretched little empire whom he chose, and, having tired of his prime minister, hanged him just for a change. His subject revolted and turned him out. The fugitive prince came to Kennedy and asked him to take strong measures against them. But this move was rather ill-advised. Kennedy told him roundly that he deserved hanging himself, and promised

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1. Moorcroft, William, *Travels in the Himalayan Provinces*, pp. 38-39.

2. Jacquemont, Victor, *Letters From India* 1936 p. 153.



to see to it that he should not be able to hang others again. Lord William has only to make a stroke of his pen to wipe out kingdoms of that sort.

<sup>1</sup>Baron Charles Hugel, a German traveller, also passed through Bilaspur during the month of October, 1835 and in his travelogue he has left his impression about this raja and at the same time he has kept on record a very vivid and impressionable account as to the scenic beauty and wonderful lie of Bilaspur. His remarks are worth reproduction. "From Simla, where this Raja, and thirty-two of the petty sovereigns of the Himalaya besides, have kept an agent since the peace of 1815, which placed them all under the protection of the English, Major Kennedy, the Political Agent in these parts, had forwarded a Notification of my arrival to Bilaspur, that my journey might not be impeded by any want of bearers or horses; and on my coming I found the Raja's own state- or durbar tent, pitched for me, in a lovely garden on the banks of the Satluj river. I was soon honoured with a visit from the Raja in person, attended by his miniature court. Of all the ignorant and unmannered native chiefs on this side of the river, he is, perhaps, the most rude and unpolished. The half hour he remained proved a very tedious one to me. His excesses in wine and spirit drinking have well-nigh robbed him, though still in the prime of life of the miserable intellect he might once had. His favourites are two Bengalees, as unworthy as their lord, who speak a little English. According to the custom of the country, he expected me to return his visit, and receive the presents he had prepared for me; but the impressions I had received were so unpleasant that through my Munshi, Thakur-Dass I very politely excused myself and agreed, as a compensation, to accept of seven mules, which were not to be had for any money. Hugel appears to have over prejudiced him against the ruler whose background could not properly be appreciated by a foreigner, a few days old in India.

<sup>2</sup>Vigne passed through Bilaspur to Suket and Mandi, in 1835, to begin four years of continuous travel in the Western Hills. On his way back he again passed through Bilaspur in March, 1839; and found a deplorable change. The State administration was completely disorganised, and civil war was in progress, as its result of long-continued tyranny and oppression. The bazar was almost deserted and the town half-depopulated, owing to so many of the inhabitants having fled into other States for security. The Raja's chief enjoyment was riding on fighting elephants, of which he kept a great number. When money for his pleasures was required, and the treasury was empty, he seized the property of the officials. The opulent classes were subjected to heavy taxation, and even the jagirdars-his own kinsmen had

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<sup>1</sup> Hugel, Baron Charles. *Travels in Kashmir and Punjab*, (1845) P. 21.

<sup>2</sup> Vigne, G.T. *Travels in Kashmir, Ladak, Iskardo*, (1844) :p. 62-63.

their Jagirs confiscated. When the burden became unbearable, the people went to Mian Jagat Chand, the Raja's uncle, and begged him to help them. The Political Agent was then called from Ambala, and he admonished the Raja, but advice was disregarded. Finally a revolt occurred, led by the two uncles, one of whom was Jagat Chand, and fighting continued for sometime. This was the condition of things when Vigne passed through. Shortly afterwards the rajah contracted small-pox and died.

#### **Raja Jagat Chand (1839-1857)**

Raja Khark Chand died childless and, on hearing of his death, Mian Jangi, afterwards known as Jagat Chand, who was descended from Raja Ajmer Chand (1712), through his third son, Mian Chimna, came and performed the funeral rites. Notice was sent to the Political Agent at Ambala, and he came at once. He was informed that there was no direct heir, neither was any of the widow ranis was enceinte. It seems that one of the Mians or royal kinsmen, named\* Mian Changhnian, descended from Suchet Chand, was next in the succession, but Jagat Chand had taken the leading part in their defence against the oppressive rule of Khark Chand, and the people all acclaimed him as Raja. After full inquiry, in the presence of the rajas of Sirmur and Handur, the Political Agent reported, to Government in favour of Mian Jagat Chand, who was duly installed, in April, 1839.

Two of Khark Chand's ranis, twin sisters, were from Sirmur. They had returned to their home State on Jagat Chand's accession. Sometime later, it was given out that the younger rani was pregnant, and the fact had been concealed for fear of Jagat Chand. A son was said to have been born in November of the same year. Jagat Chand affirmed that the child was surreptitious. The ranis then returned to Bilaspur with an army, furnished by the raja of Sirmur, and a force from Suket, to claim the gadi. The officials and army officers of the State deserted Jagat Chand and went over to the other side. Jagat Chand had no alternative but to flee to Handur to save his life. Information was sent to the Political Agent, who came with a force, and, after inquiry, dispersed the party opposed to Jagat Chand and restored him to power.

Raja Ram Saran of Handur also helped Jagat Chand. The Raja was deeply religious, and spent much time daily in the performance of the rituals of his religion.

On his accession he refunded the loan of Rs. 1,20,000 contracted with Nalagarh during the disturbances, and restored peace and prosperity to the State. The amount was subscribed in full by the people of the State, at the rate of four annas per plough, and the parganas of Fatehpur, Bahadurpur

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\* / his family is now extinct.

and Ratanpur, made over as security for the loan to Ram Chand of Nalagarh, were then redeemed.

In 1847, on the cession of the Julundhar Doab to the British Government, after the first Sikh war, Jagat Chand was confirmed in the possession of the territory on the right bank of the Satluj, which the State had held since 1809, on terms of allegiance and tribute to the Sikhs. The British Government waived its claim to the tribute, but required the raja to abolish transit duties in his territory. These terms were spelled out in the *sanad* dated October 21, 1847, granted to Raja Jagat Chand by the British Government.

Raja Jagat Chand, had only one son, named Narpat Chand, who died in 1844, leaving a son, named Hira Chand, nine years of age. As the raja was well advanced in years, his chief concern, during the later years of his reign was to prepare his grandson in every way for the high position he was to fill. When he came of age in 1850, Jagat Chand, with the consent of Government, abdicated in his favour, and retired from the State, to spend the rest of his life in Brindaban and other holy places. He died in 1857.

#### **Raja Hira Chand (1857-1882)**

Raja Hira Chand was installed by the Deputy Commissioner of Simla, and proved himself a capable ruler.

In 1857 effective support in many directions was rendered to British Government by the Bilaspur raja, in acknowledgement of which a salute of eleven guns was granted as an honour to the State; as also a *khillat* of the value of five thousand rupees along with other gifts. In the same year his son Amar Chand was born.

The following *sanad* of adoption was granted to the ruler on March 5, 1862.

"Her Majesty being desirous that the Government of the several Princes and Chiefs of India who now govern their own territories should be perpetuated, and that the representation and dignity of their Houses should be continued, in fulfilment of this desire, this Sunnud is given to you to convey to you the assurance that, on failure of natural heirs, the British Government will recognise and confirm any adoption of a successor made by yourself or by any future chief of your State that may be in accordance with Hindoo law and the customs of your race."

"Be assured that nothing shall disturb the Engagement thus made to you so long as your House is loyal to the Crown, and faithful to the conditions of the Treaties, Grants, or Engagements which record its obligations to the British Government. 5th March 1862".

CANNING".

Raja Hira Chand made a great many changes in the Financial Department of the State. Till 1863 the land revenue was paid in kind the State taking one-third of the produce. In that year the raja reorganised the system and made the revenue demand payable partly in cash and partly in kind, in certain selected portions of the territory. Mian Bhangi was his wazir and though illiterate, was an able and intelligent officer, who rendered great help in the early years of his rule. In 1867 a long strip of country called Baseh Bachhretu, extending into the heart of Kahlur and originally State territory, was restored to the State. Sometime before the Doab was ceded by the Sikhs in 1846, this tract had been taken possession of by Lehna Singh, son of Dessa Singh Majithia, Nazimor Governor of the Kangra Hills. Having been annexed by the Sikhs it was treated as a part of the Kangra district, but granted in jagir to the raja of Kahlur, subject to land tax, and was finally restored, subject to the payment of a small tribute of eight thousand rupees. The State was thus restored to its ancient limits, except Jhanbhari, the original nucleus, now in the Punjab which was treated as British territory.

In 1882 accompanied by his son, Tikka Amar Chand, he paid a visit to Simla, where he had previously built a residence, for an interview with the Viceroy and the Commissioner, and was taken seriously ill. Medical aid failed to bring relief and, realising his father's dangerous condition, the Tikka Sahib removed him in a *palki* (palanquin), but he died at Maholi on the way to Bilaspur.

The Golden Age still remembered by the people of Bilaspur was the long administration of Raja Hira Chand. It was he who organised the State with the help of an able wazir, Mian Bhangi Purgnia.

#### **Raja Amar Chand (1883—1888)**

Amar Chand son of Hira Chand, born in 1857, succeeded and was installed by the Deputy Commissioner Simla, in January 1883 and had a short reign.

Raja Amar Chand was unfortunate in his administration of the State, owing to the inadequate assistance rendered by his officials. The administration in consequence became very disorganised, resulting in disorder and out break of violence, there was discontent at the changes made in the tenure of land. Strong measures had to be adopted to suppress these disorders and restore peace. He was an easy going administrator and, therefore, played in the hands of his inexperienced servants. Administration was neglected and more disorder cropped up. Consequently on 21st Baisakha 1939 Bk. (1882—83) brahmins of village Gherwin, Lohlahm, Kot and Panthera performed the '*jugya*' ceremony as a protest against the maladministration. The aggrieved brahmins used to prepare a '*jugga*' (a small hut made of grass

and wood) and fly a banner on it. The brahmins then sat in it along with their deities. As soon as an effort was made to arrest them they used to set the hut (*jugga*) on fire and perish along with it. This supreme sacrifice of self was made with a hope that the raja would desist from tyranny. The practice was prevalent among the saintly brahmins revered by Hindus.

On 18 *Jayestha* 1941 *Bk.* (1884) the raja sent to Gherwin a small force, under Niranjana tahsildar for arresting the agitators. On seeing the force Rawalu and Ghethal set their '*juggas*' aflame and perished. The brahmins of Gherwin village, therefore, took the law in their hands and opened fire upon the Tahsildar, captured, and, burnt him in '*jugga*'. The force fled to Bilaspur. Next morning about one hundred and fifty brahmins, along with their families left the State and fled to Hamirpur. The State officials, however, brought them back. The same year later another brahmin named Nathu of village Lohan burnt himself to death in the '*jugga*'. The raja however, did not relent.

Raja Amar Chand extended the system of cash payment, in the land revenue demand, initiated by his father, and also abolished *begar* recovering in lieu a cash rate of twenty-five per cent called *bathangna*. In 1885 the record of cases was ordered to be kept in Nagri (Hindi). Till then the cases used to be decided orally and no record was maintained. In 1886 the old administrative sub-divisions of the State were re-arranged and the old names dropped in favour of tahsils and thanas, as in the British territory. During his rule he opened schools, hospitals and got a suspension bridge over Satluj constructed. Raja Amar Chand died towards the end of 1888.

Raja Bijai Chand, forty-third ruler of the line, was born in 1872. As he was still a minor, a council of regency was formed, and the raja was sent to the Chiefs College, Lahore, to complete his education where he spent about one-and-a-half years. He was invested with full powers in 1893. He had a good command over Sanskrit and was fond of hunting.

Having been installed in 1889 he effected many reforms in the State administration. Court fee and non-judicial stamps were introduced for the first time. Official business was started to be conducted as files started to be maintained in Urdu. He also had a water supply system laid in Bilaspur town. The first forest settlement was conducted under his orders. He abolished many obsolete taxes and raised the Bilaspur Middle School to High Standard.

The people, particularly officers, did not like reforms and therefore, disorders cropped up. The raja, disgusted due to the disorders, built two houses for his residence in Varanasi at a cost of two lac rupees (in 1896-1902). During this period the raja occasionally stayed at Varanasi. He also built a summer house at Bahadurpur and at a place called Haridwar near Bilaspur

as also the famous Rang Mahal palace at Bilaspur at a cost of over two-and-a-half lacs, of rupees.

Almost from the beginning, Raja Bijai Chand seems to have become discouraged about State affairs. He was desirous of administering the territory on the British model, but received no assistance from his officials in carrying out his plans. In 1901 the raja began to have trouble with Mians and disorders again followed. The discontent increased and resulted in a rebellion during 1901, fomented by the Chandel Rajputs. They arrested Khan Chand Wazir and Kesho Ram Tahsildar. The uprising was, however, controlled with the help of British Government and on their advice Lala Hari Chand a retired tahsildar, was appointed a Wazir in 1902. The raja became depressed and dispirited in consequence, and indicated a wish to divest himself of his administrative duties. On the advice of Superintendent Hill States A. Meriditts, a council was appointed for the administration of the State. The council also could not improve the conditions and the raja, therefore, dismissed it. Many wazirs were then appointed one after the other.

The raja made over the administration of the State to Lala Hari Chand and departed for Varanasi, where he had already caused a house to be built at considerable cost.

In 1903 Raj Sahib Mian Amar Singh, a tahsildar of Jullundur Division, was appointed Manager of the State, and carried out many reforms in an efficient manner. The administration had been in chaotic conditions for a long time, and State affairs were in doldrum. The Manager entered upon his duties with energy and discretion.

In a few years all debts were discharged. The criminal, Civil and Revenue Courts were established; a regular settlement was carried out, a school and a hospital were built; a police force was organised and system introduced into every department of the State.

The raja returned to the State in 1908 and resumed control of the State with Raj Sahib Amar Singh as wazir. On the outbreak of the Great War of 1914 the raja offered his personal services and the resources of his State to the British Government. For his services he was decorated and conferred the title of K.C.I.E. as also the honorary rank of a Major. He was also empowered to sentence for capital punishment. He died in Varanasi in 1931 at the age of 59 years. Raja Anand Chand (1928). He was born on the 26th January, 1913 and while only about fifteen years old when he acceded to the gadi in 1928. The ceremony was performed by the Agent to the Governor-General. The Raja was presented with a sword and a robe of honour from His Majesty the King Emperor. After the ceremony of investiture the young raja returned to Mayo College, Ajmer to resume his studies there. He had a very distinguished career in the academic as also in

the athletic spheres. In March, 1931, he passed the Post Diploma Course Examination with distinction. He then received training in revenue settlement and administration of civil and criminal laws at Gurgaon in British Punjab. In February, 1939 he returned to Bilaspur after his training. He married princess Uma Vati daughter of Raja Rana Sir Bhagat Chand of erstwhile Jubbal State in 1931. The modern era of reforms in all branches of administration started during this rule. A council of administration was appointed by the Resident of the Punjab Hill States and a second revenue settlement conducted which resulted in a sort of revolt. This was however, quelled.

In 1835 the question of the Indian States Federation was conceived which did not, however, materialise. In 1939 Government sponsored a scheme of joint administration for smaller Indian States in order to give them viability. Bilaspur opposed these measures and was left untouched.

The Second World War broke out in 1939 and came to an end in 1945. The small State of Bilaspur played its own part in the war. Nearly three thousand men were enlisted in India's armed forces and won many awards including the Victoria Cross and the George Cross.

The long and great political struggle in India for freedom, which gained momentum with the 'Quit India Movement' demand in 1942, brought Independence to the country in 1947. Thereafter Bilaspur, as one of the Indian States, acceded to the Indian Dominion and signed the Instrument of Accession. The raja ruled upto October 9, 1948, when Bilaspur State was integrated with the Union of India as a Chief Commissioner's Part 'C' State vide agreement dated August 15, 1948.

Though new changes in India's political conditions, after Independence, resulted in the integration of all the Indian States as a result of which most of them ceased to exist as separate entities but Bilaspur fared slightly differently.

Geographically it was a part of Himachal Pradesh and should have been included in it but for one consideration; this was the gigantic multi-purpose Bhakra Dam Project over the Satluj. The main dam site was in Bilaspur and a substantial area of the State, including the capital and palace, would be submerged when the dam was constructed. The project was conceived about 1919 A.D. but became a practical proposition only after the conclusion of the Second World War. About the time of partition, the Government of the Punjab were negotiating with the Raja of Bilaspur for the construction of the dam and had nearly come to an agreement with him. If the Government of the Punjab had undertaken the project, the distribution of the water would have been at their discretion. This would have been

unfair to PEPSU and Rajasthan which were beneficiaries under the scheme equally with the Punjab. Under the Act of 1935, the Government of India had no power to control multipurpose river-valley schemes. The Centre obtained this power only under the new Constitution. If, therefore, the Government of India were to intervene and it was necessary that they should in this case the only alternative was to take over Bilaspur as a Chief Commissioner's province. By so doing, the Government of India would inherit the jurisdiction and powers of the Raja of Bilaspur and would have the final say. We could have achieved the same purpose if we had amalgamated Bilaspur with Himachal Pradesh, which was already a Chief Commissioner's province. But Bilaspur had problems of its own. Till such time as the Bhakra Dam was completed, displaced persons rehabilitated, and compensation paid to those dispossessed of their lands, it was essential in the interests of both the State and its people that Bilaspur should be under the care of the Centre. It had also another idea, namely, that when the Bhakra Dam scheme was completed, its management should be entrusted to a Board which should take over what was left of the State after submersion and develop it as part of the scheme.

Mr. Menon further, says,

"I had several discussions with the Rajah both in Delhi and Bilaspur. He was rather difficult to deal with; but ultimately, on 15 August 1948 he signed the merger agreement."

As stipulated in article I of the Merger Agreement the raja of Bilaspur transferred the administration of the State to the Dominion Government on October 12, 1948. On the same day he was himself appointed by the Government of India, as the first Chief Commissioner of the newly formed part 'C' State and, he continued as such up to April 1, 1949. On April 2, 1949, he handed over the charge of the chief Commissionership to Shri Sri Chand Chhabra, P.C.S., the then Deputy Chief Commissioner who was promoted as the Chief Commissioner. Shri Chhabra continued to hold the charge of the Chief Commissionership up to November 3, 1963, when Major General Himmat Singhji, the then Lieutenant-Governor of Himachal Pradesh, took over the additional charge of the Chief Commissionership of Bilaspur also. On July 1, 1954, Bilaspur, as expected, was merged into Himachal Pradesh to form a district and placed under the charge of a Deputy Commissioner. The merger came about by virtue of, *The Himachal Pradesh and Bilaspur (new State) Act 1954 (Act No. 32 of 1954)*.



# Chapter III

## PEOPLE

### POPULATION

#### Total population

As in other erstwhile States, now forming Himachal Pradesh, along with the then Punjab, census operations in Bilaspur State were conducted for the first time in 1881 by Ibbetson. The total population according to 1881 census was 86,546. Thereafter decennial censuses were taken uninterruptedly. Tahsilwise population was not, however, recorded separately until 1931. But for the decade ending with 1901, when the population registered a rather inconsequential fall, a regular revelation of these periodical counts has shown a steady increase decennium after decennium, as would be apparent from the statistics given below :

| Census year |                   | Total population | Males  | Females |
|-------------|-------------------|------------------|--------|---------|
| 1881        |                   | 86,546           | 47,133 | 39,413  |
| 1891        |                   | 91,760           | 49,595 | 42,165  |
| 1901        |                   | 90,873           | 49,384 | 41,489  |
| 1911        |                   | 93,107           | 50,000 | 43,098  |
| 1921        |                   | 98,000           | 52,306 | 45,694  |
| 1931        | Sadar tahsil.     | 40,206           | 21,590 | 18,616  |
|             | Ghamarwin tahsil. | 60,788           | 31,564 | 29,224  |
| 1941        | Sadar tahsil.     | 43,411           | 23,072 | 20,339  |
|             | Ghamarwin tahsil. | 66,925           | 33,863 | 33,062  |
| 1951        | Sadar tahsil.     | 48,247           | 24,939 | 23,308  |
|             | Ghamarwin tahsil. | 77,852           | 39,799 | 38,053  |
| 1961        | Sadar tahsil.     | 79,513           | 42,375 | 37,138  |
|             | Ghamarwin tahsil. | 79,293           | 38,988 | 40,305  |
| 1971        | Sadar tahsil.     | 75,048           | 97,758 | 97,028  |
|             | Ghamarwin tahsil. | 119,738          |        |         |

The table given below denotes increase and decrease in population, separately for males and females, as registered at the time of each decennial census :—

| Census<br>Year | Persons  | Males  | Females | Increase or decrease |         | Percent<br>age |       |
|----------------|----------|--------|---------|----------------------|---------|----------------|-------|
|                |          |        |         | Males.               | Females |                |       |
| 1              | 2        | 3      | 4       | 5                    | 6       | 7              |       |
| 1881           | 86,546   | 47,133 | 39,413  |                      |         |                |       |
| 1891           | 91,760   | 49,595 | 42,165  | +                    | 2,462   | +              | 6.02  |
| 1901           | 90,873   | 49,384 | 41,489  | —                    | 211     | —              | 1.06  |
| 1911           | 93,107   | 50,009 | 43,098  | +                    | 625     | +              | 2.46  |
| 1921           | 98,000   | 52,306 | 45,694  | +                    | 2,297   | +              | 5.26  |
| 1931           | 1,00,994 | 53,154 | 47,840  | +                    | 848     | +              | 3.06  |
| 1941           | 1,10,336 | 56,935 | 53,401  | +                    | 3,781   | +              | 9.25  |
| 1951           | 1,26,099 | 64,738 | 61,361  | +                    | 7,803   | +              | 14.29 |
| 1961           | 1,58,806 | 81,363 | 77,443  | +                    | 16,625  | +              | 25.94 |
| 1971           | 1,94,786 | 97,758 | 97,028  | +                    | 16,395  | +              | 22.66 |

These census figures present a very interesting study. Firstly it is apparent that increase registered in the number has been touching higher and higher marks after each census, the highest being 25.94% in 1961 on the previous census, so that the increase in 1961 over the population of 1881 works out to 84%. The increase between 1961 and 1971 is 22.66. This is staggering indeed secondly, the females contributed, almost invariably, more to the increase than the males. This usual feature has been intercepted by 1961 count which shows greater contribution by males and forms the sole exception in the history of census. The increase in population, with an accelerated pace, is perhaps the combined result of many and varied factors.

It could perhaps not be denied that some addition to the number is due to the ignorance of the majority of people about the consequences of an unplanned large family being the result of unrestrained and unchecked production of children under the influence of a fatalistic outlook where there is no scope for scientific thinking. It may also be true that some increase is the outcome of improvements in the method of taking census count.

The district has an area of 1163.1 sq. km. The trend as has been seen above is towards rapid increase in the number making the existing space

more and more congested. This will be borne out by study of the density of population per square mile in the district as worked out at each census 1881 to 1971. In 1881 the density was found 193.1 followed by 190.7 in 1891, 201 in 1901, 208 in 1911, 219 in 1921, 225 in 1931, 214 in 1941, 278 in 1951, 354 in 1961 and 435 in 1971 per square mile. It is obvious from these figures that one square mile of land, holding 193.1 persons in 1881 has to bear the burden of about 435 persons in 1971. This is almost more than double the number in 1881. Implication of this increase can easily be understood. The situation would appear to be more appalling when the density is considered against the cultivated area, obviously much less than the total area.

**Migration :—**A broad idea of an out flow of population from this district can be had from what has been stated, although in a different context in the assessment report of the erstwhile Bilaspur State drawn in 1933. The author of the report says, "Enquiry made through the Municipal Committee of Simla shows that the Bilaspur State supplied in 1933 no less than 1233 Rickshaw coolies and job porters for Simla alone. Assume at least 100 more for Jutogh, Subathoo, Dagshai, Solon and Dharampur."

"Bilaspur is famous for supplying cooks and menial servants of all kinds in the principal cities and towns of the Punjab. I take their number at 500. The total number of coolies and labourers who go outside for work, comes to approximately 1800 men." This statement by and large, still holds good, though now educated youths go out to find employment alongwith the seasonal migration of able bodied villagers to Simla and neighbouring towns of Sabathu, Nangal and Bhakra. The latter still migrate for earning livelihood as rickshaw pullers and menial labourers there.

A large number of youngmen from this district migrate to join the Indian Army every year. They make fine soldiers. The appeal for armed profession is mainly confined to Ghamarwin tahsil or what may be called the trans Satluj tract of this district. The pressure of population on this rather poor soil of the area, is rather heavy and therefore, the people have to move out for earning their livelihood. As anywhere else, in this part of the country, the people being generally illiterate, find a ready market for their labour in the adjoining towns and scope of employment in the Army, where good physique and strong limbs are assets.

**Immigration :—**This district could not in the past attract people from outside as it was practically a land locked area and remained absolutely cut off in the rainy season, with no facility of rail or road transport. Now the district has been opened up to all-weather vehicular traffic to Simla, Mandi, Kiratpur Railway Station and Hamirpur districts. Two new bridges across the Satluj at Kandror and Salapar and a number of other pukka bridges have made

\*Chandu Lal, P.L. :—*Assessment Report of the Bilaspur State, 1933*, p.26.

it easier for people to enter the district. This has resulted in greater contact with the outside world. The following table denotes the ebb and flow of population due to migration :—

**Pre-Independence migration table**

| District, State<br>Province or<br>Country.     | Immigrants |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|--|------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
|  | 1881       | 1891 | 1901 | 1911 | 1921 | 1931 | 1941 |
| 1.   | 2.         | 3.   | 4.   | 5.   | 6.   | 7.   | 8.   |
| Ambala Division.                               | 74         | 194  | 762  | 568  | 335  | —    | —    |
| Jullundur<br>Division.                         | 1459       | 2877 | 4708 | 1764 | 3111 | —    | —    |
| Lahore Division.                               | 5          | 7    | 7    | 11   | 78   | 3299 | —    |
| Rawalpindi<br>Division.                        | 1          | 1    | 19   | 2    | —    | —    | —    |
| Multan Division.                               | 1          | 2    | 4    | 11   | 3    | —    | —    |
| Simla Hill States.                             | 617        | 883  | 1862 | 1400 | 1283 | —    | —    |
| Other States under<br>the Local<br>Government. | —          | 2    | 8    | 2    | 6    | 3995 | —    |
| States in the<br>Punjab States<br>Agency.      | 261        | 720  | 537  | 1095 | 1631 | —    | —    |
| Punjab Unspecified.                            | —          | —    | —    | —    | —    | —    | —    |
| Other Provinces<br>and States in India.        | 56         | 72   | —    | —    | —    | 22   | —    |
| Other Asiatic<br>countries.                    | 1          | 5    | —    | —    | —    | 6    | —    |
| Europe.  | —          | —    | —    | —    | —    | —    | —    |

## Emigrants

| Districts, State,<br>Province or<br>Country.  | 1881 | 1891 | 1901 | 1911 | 1921 | 1931 | 1941 |
|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1.  | 2.   | 3.   | 4.   | 5.   | 6.   | 7.   | 8.   |
| Ambala Division                               | 326  | —    | 205  | 103  | 286  | —    | —    |
| Jullundur Division                            | —    | —    | 2650 | 3210 | 6176 | —    | —    |
| Lahore Division                               | —    | —    | 26   | 17   | 11   | —    | —    |
| Rawalpindi<br>Division                        | —    | —    | 1    | 5    | 15   | —    | —    |
| Multan Division                               | —    | —    | —    | —    | 5    | —    | —    |
| Simla Hill States                             | 2032 | 2254 | 450  | 48   | 2390 | —    | —    |
| Other States<br>under the Local<br>Government | 1    | 1    | —    | 1    | —    | —    | —    |
| States in the<br>Punjab States<br>Agency      | 1741 | 2461 | 1647 | 31   | 1058 | —    | —    |
| Punjab Unspecified                            | —    | —    | —    | 4    | —    | —    | —    |
| Other Provinces<br>and States in India        | —    | —    | 56   | 50   | 46   | —    | —    |
| Other Asiatic<br>countries                    | —    | —    | 18   | 2    | 7    | —    | —    |
| Europe  | —    | —    | —    | —    | —    | —    | —    |

## Immigrants (Born outside the District)

| District, State<br>etc. or country<br>where born. | Population of District |        |        | Bilaspur tahsil<br>rural tract. |        |
|---|------------------------|--------|--------|---------------------------------|--------|
|   | P                      | M      | F      | M                               | F      |
| 1.  | 2.                     | 3.     | 4.     | 5.                              | 6.     |
| A-I-District within<br>the State.*                | 114,789                | 51,733 | 53,056 | 21,715                          | 18,057 |
| A-II State Etc. in India<br>beyond the State.     | 10,932                 | 2,769  | 8,163  | 1,144                           | 3,519  |
| Total A   | 125,721                | 54,502 | 61,219 | 22,859                          | 21,586 |
| B-Countries in Asia<br>beyond India.              | 296                    | 218    | 78     | 29                              | 24     |
| Total B   | 296                    | 218    | 78     | 29                              | 24     |
| C-Countries in Europe.                            | —                      | —      | —      | —                               | —      |
| Total C   | —                      | —      | —      | —                               | —      |
| D-Countries in Africa.                            | 3                      | 2      | 1      | —                               | —      |
| Total D   | 3                      | 2      | 1      | —                               | —      |
| E-Countries in America.                           | —                      | —      | —      | —                               | —      |
| Total E   | —                      | —      | —      | —                               | —      |
| L-Countries in Australia                          | —                      | —      | —      | —                               | —      |
| Total F   | —                      | —      | —      | —                               | —      |
| G-At Sea  | —                      | —      | —      | —                               | —      |
| Total G   | —                      | —      | —      | —                               | —      |
| Total returned                                    | 126,020                | 64,722 | 61,298 | 22,886                          | 21,610 |
| Birth place not returned                          | 79                     | 16     | 63     | —                               | 4      |
| Total population                                  | 126,099                | 64,738 | 61,361 | 22,888                          | 21,614 |

\*Census of India 1931 Bilaspur State, District Census Handbooks, Volume 26, District Bilaspur, pp. 144-45

\*Difference of 10,000 souls.

## Immigrants born outside the District

| Ghamarwin Rural Tract |        | Bilaspur Non-city<br>Urban Tract |       | Tahsil Bilaspur |        |
|-----------------------|--------|----------------------------------|-------|-----------------|--------|
| M.                    | F.     | M.                               | F.    | M.              | F.     |
| 7.                    | 8.     | 9.                               | 10.   | 11.             | 12.    |
| 28,317                | 33,655 | 1,731                            | 1,334 | 23,416          | 19,401 |
| 1,347                 | 4,328  | 278                              | 316   | 4,422           | 3,835  |
| 29,664                | 37,983 | 1,979                            | 1,650 | *24,838         | 23,236 |
| 119                   | 11     | 70                               | 43    | 119             | 11     |
| 119                   | 11     | 70                               | 43    | 119             | 11     |
| —                     | —      | —                                | —     | —               | —      |
| 6                     | —      | —                                | —     | —               | —      |
| —                     | —      | 2                                | 1     | —               | —      |
| —                     | —      | 2                                | 1     | —               | —      |
| —                     | —      | —                                | —     | —               | —      |
| —                     | —      | —                                | —     | —               | —      |
| —                     | —      | —                                | —     | —               | —      |
| —                     | —      | —                                | —     | —               | —      |
| —                     | —      | —                                | —     | —               | —      |
| —                     | —      | —                                | —     | —               | —      |
| 29,783                | 37,994 | 2,051                            | 1,694 | 39,783          | 37,994 |
| 16                    | 59     | —                                | —     | 16              | 59     |
| 29,799                | 38,053 | 2,051                            | 1,694 | 39,799          | 38,053 |

\*Difference of 3000 souls.

| Countries where born |   |   | P   | M   | F  |
|----------------------|---|---|-----|-----|----|
| Nepal                | — | — | 118 | 115 | 3  |
| Ceylon               | — | — | 2   | 2   | —  |
| Pakistan             | — | — | 176 | 101 | 75 |
| Africa               | — | — | 3   | 2   | 1  |
| Total                | — | — | 299 | 220 | 79 |

**Distribution between urban and rural areas.**

**Drift towards towns or villages and reasons for it—**

There was within the district, from the very beginning, only one place, namely, Bilaspur town, which, being the seat of the Government, had some semblance to an urban area, though the entire territory of this district has continued to retain its traditional rural, characteristic. In 1942 however, another small place, namely Naina Devi, was declared to be a small town committee. This is in fact a tiny place with a permanent population, according to 1951 census, of 305 persons. But being a great pilgrimage centre it attracts thousands of visitors during the fairs and festivals. It has however, added to the urban population of the district. In 1971 census, Ghamarwin Notified Area Committee has emerged as a town. The following statistics would give an idea of the urban population which constitutes but a small percentage of the total population.

| Census Years. | Bilaspur | Naina Devi | Ghamarwin | Total |
|---------------|----------|------------|-----------|-------|
| 1881          | N.A.     | —          | —         | —     |
| 1891          | 3,260    | —          | —         | 3,260 |
| 1901          | 3,192    | —          | —         | 3,192 |
| 1911          | N.A.     | —          | —         | —     |
| 1921          | 4,257    | —          | —         | 4,257 |
| 1931          | 2,387    | —          | —         | 2,387 |
| 1941          | 2,873    | —          | —         | 2,873 |
| 1951          | 3,745    | 305        | —         | 4,050 |
| 1961          | 7,424    | 328        | —         | 7,752 |
| 1971          | 7,037    | 494        | 1967      | 9,498 |



These figures reveal unmistakably that barring isolated instances, appears to have been no significant drift of population from the rural areas to the three aforesaid urban areas and vice versa. The increase shown by these statistics can be regarded only a normal rise in the number unrelated to any drift from either side. The latest addition to the urban population is by assigning an urban character to Naina Devi which assumes importance due to the temple of the goddess Naina, located there, attracting her devotees in large number and in whose honour an annual fair takes place during the month of August, when the place is considerably thronged. Seasonal migration for the sake of supplementing family earnings is of course there but it has no effect on the population as a whole as all such immigrants return to their homes after a few months of casual labour. The district has a rural bias. The percentage of rural population to total population is 95.1 and the number of persons per occupied house in the rural areas is 5.28 and 5.00 in the town according to 1961 census.

### Displaced persons

The expression 'Displaced persons', assumed importance in the wake of 1947 partition. For Census purposes, a displaced person was taken to mean "any person who has entered India having left or been compelled to leave his home in Western Pakistan on or after the 1st March, 1947, on account of disturbances or on account of the setting up of the two Dominions of India and Pakistan". But some persons, who have migrated to India from the then Western Pakistan even before 1st March, 1947, returned themselves as displaced persons at the time of census taking, for the simple reason that they had left their immovable property in Pakistan, such persons have also been included in the definition of 'Displaced persons'.

In 1947 when the country was partitioned into two Independent States—India and Pakistan, one hundred and sixty-five, including ninety-six males and sixty-nine females, displaced persons from the then West Pakistan came over to this district and settled. Only three of them were agriculturists, the remaining one hundred and sixty-two followed non-agricultural professions. Tahsilwise distribution of the displaced persons along with the places of their resettlement is given below :—<sup>a</sup>

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1. *Census of India, 1951—Bilaspur State, District Census Handbooks, volume 26 Bilaspur District.*

2. *Census of India, 1951—vol. VIII, Punjab, Pepsu, Himachal Pradesh, Bilaspur and Delhi.* p 331.

|  | Males | Females | Total |
|--|-------|---------|-------|
| (Sadr) tahsil rural tract.               | 21    | 19      | 40    |
| Ghamarwin tahsil rural tract.            | 5     | —       | 5     |
| Total rural population                   | 26    | 19      | 45    |
| Non-city urban tract.<br>[tahsil (Sadr)] | 70    | 50      | 120   |
| Tahsil (Sadr)                            | 91    | 69      | 160   |
| Grand Total.                             | 96    | 69      | 165   |

All these displaced persons belonged to the then West Pakistan of whom twenty-five came from Lahore, twenty-two from Sialkot, twenty-two from Gujranwala, one from Shahpur, seven from Rawalpindi, nine from Attock, sixteen from Montgomery, nine from Lyallpur, eight from Jhang, seven from Multan, twenty-five from Dehra Ghazi Khan, eleven from Sukkur and three from Bahawalpur.

The displaced persons in the district, as also elsewhere in Himachal Pradesh, were provided with the usual facilities and financial assistance to help them settle in the normal life as quickly as possible. According to the 1961 census born in Pakistan and emmerged in the district was 423, 267 men and 156 women.

## LANGUAGE

Perhaps the most comprehensive survey of the Indian languages so far made is "*The Linguistic Survey of India*" by Grierson and published in Calcutta by the Government of India in 1916. Another survey (*Studies in Northern Himalayan Dialects* 1963), no less important, relating to the Himalayan languages, is that by the Rev. T. Grahame Bailey, results of which are found in the Royal Asiatic Society Monographs, Volume. XVII, published in 1915 A. D.

*The Linguistic Survey of India, Volume IX* gives the language of Bilaspur as Kahluri, which finds mention on page 677 of part I of that Volume. In the scheme of nomenclature and classification adopted in this survey, the language and dialects connected with Bilaspur and the adjoining areas are shown as in the following table :—

## Central Group of Indo-Aryan Languages

## Volume IX

| Punjabī<br>(Part I)    |                                   | Pahārī<br>(Part IV)          | Gujarī<br>(Part IV page 925)        |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Dogri<br>(Page 637)    | Standard<br>Punjabī<br>(Page 646) | Western Pahārī<br>(Page 375) | Sub montane<br>Gujarī<br>(Page 959) |
| Kahlurī<br>(Page 677)  |                                   | Mandī Group<br>(Page 715)    | Gujarī of Kangra<br>(Page 962)      |
| Kandīālī<br>(Page 775) | Kangrī<br>(Page 776)              | Gadī<br>(Page 793)           | Chhota Banghalī<br>(Page 715)       |

From the above, attempt has been made to prove that "Kahlurī" (Bilaspurī) is an off shoot of Punjabī and the dialects of the erstwhile States of Kahlur and Mangal are termed "Kahlurī" or "Bilaspurī". Grierson calls it "a rude Punjabī" similar to that spoken in Hoshiarpur district. He supports this contention by giving a few specimen sentences of Bilaspurī on page 678 of Volume IX Part I.

Rev. Bailey who seems to have made a more detailed survey of the dialects of the Simla Hills, which are reproduced in the *Punjab States Gazetteer Volume VIII "Simla Hill States"* and published under the authority of the Punjab Government in 1910 indicates in the introduction that his notes concern the dialects of the Northern and Central Simla States and not those of Bilaspur. Later, however, he describes as under. \*

"There are in all six dialects spoken in Bilaspur, or Kahlur as the State is some-times called (Plate 3). In the centre of the State extending to a distance of six or seven miles in every direction from the Capital is the standard dialect of Bilaspurī or Kahlurī. Immediately to the west of this, in the portion of the State which cuts out westward and is bounded on the north by the district of Kangra we find a dialect which we may call Western Bilaspur.

To the north of the standard dialect are found two minor dialects, that to the west near the Kangra border, to which we may give the name Northern Bilaspurī, while that on the east near the Mandī border is the same as Mandīālī which has been treated in the Language of the Himalayas. Immediately south of the area of the standard dialect the people speak a slightly

different dialect which I have called Southern Bilaspuri ; its area is a narrow strip of country on the Nalagarh border, and to the east of this in south-east Bilaspur is found a dialect locally known as Dami. It extends over the border into Arki State and beyond it commences the Kunthali dialect which is spoken all over the Central Simla States."

"The Bilaspur dialects are so closely allied that one might call them one dialect Bilaspuri or Kahluri. I have preferred the former name as the State is much better known to the outside world as Bilaspur, the name Kahlur hardly being known to any one who has not visited the State."

Apart from the above description the following note on the dialects of Bilaspur, specially written for the Gazetteers compiled in 1910 by Rev. T. Grahame Bailey, Wazirabad, is reproduced below\* :—

"Bilaspur has six dialects :—

(1) North-east Bilaspuri (north-east of Kumar Hati), practically identical with Mandiali which is spoken throughout the greater part of Mandi and Suket :

(2) North Bilaspuri (North of Kumar Hati), very like Mandeali ;

(3) West Bilaspuri, with resemblances to Punjabi ;

(4) Central Bilaspuri (Bilaspur town and surrounding district), somewhat like Punjabi ;

(5) South West Bilaspuri, (South-West of Bilaspur town) ; and

(6) Dami (E. and S. E. of Bilaspur town), both resembling Mandeali and Kangri, but more like the former than the latter. West Bilaspuri has a most remarkable future tense, e.g. *karangra* or *karang* (Central Bilaspuri *karangra*), "I shall do", practically identical with the secret future of the criminal Sansis. The Bilaspur dialects do not show much likeness to Kiunthali.

According to 1961 census except for a sprinkling of languages of the other districts of Himachal Pradesh and a few from the other States who may be earning their livelihood in Bilaspur the predominant languages/dialects are shown-below :

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\*Punjab States Gazetteer, Volume Simla Hill States 1910-Introduction p.6.

| Mother Tongue             | Total  | Rural  | Urban |
|---------------------------|--------|--------|-------|
| Bilaspuri/Kahluri         | 26,058 | 24,789 | 1,269 |
| Hindi                     | 42,468 | 36,837 | 5,631 |
| Hindi Pahari              | 1,394  | 1,394  | ...   |
| Pachhimi (Western) Hindi  | 909    | 909    | ...   |
| Pachhimi (Western) Pahari | 55,138 | 55,138 | ...   |
| Pahari-unspecified        | 29,696 | 29,509 | 187   |
| Punjabi                   | 2,291  | 970    | 321   |
| Urdu                      | 97     | 47     | 50    |
| Mandiali                  | 240    | 66     | 174   |
| Kangri                    | 159    | 95     | 64    |

While the aforementioned six local dialects continue to be the vehicle of expression by word of mouth, by the people since the time immemorial yet, a parallel line of new languages having their own scripts is being adopted increasingly. We learn that during the reign of Raja Amar Chand (1883-1888) the wazir maintained proceedings of every case in Kahluri script (*Tankri*) and used to submit the same for orders of the ruler. By about 1953 Bk. (1896 or 1898) Urdu was adopted as the court language replacing Kahluri script (*Tankri*). Although the exact date is not known yet it can be said with a fair amount of certainty that English language also started coming into use increasingly after the advent of British rule. It is evident that the new languages including Hindi, Urdu and English commended themselves successively in the first instance to the higher strata of the population, that is to say, with the ruler, his court officials and then getting down among the middle classes who came into contact with the members of the higher class aristocracy in the State. It then filtered through to the masses as a result of opening up of schools, in which the medium of instruction was either Hindi or Urdu or English. Notwithstanding these developments the majority still pursued their age-old dialects with accents differing from area to area.

With the dawn of Independence great strides have been taken in the field of education, in the development of means of communications and in the general advancement of economic, social and political conditions of the

people. The impact of all these development has resulted in the rapid increases in the adoption of Hindi, Urdu and English, languages by more and more people. Thus there has been, it would seem a direct and substantial impact on the age-old and traditional dialects in the sense that these are giving way to the modern languages mostly among those who could afford education. This phenomenon obviously has its own disadvantages as it constitutes a subtle threat to the extinction of the local dialects and as trends are, in the educational and other fields, a day may come in the future when the local dialects may not be spoken and heard at all. That will undoubtedly be an unfortunate loss because the local dialects are full of folk lores deserving preservation because these are the only relics and records of the hoary past which are so valuable for interpretation of historical and other similar terms. Realising this danger the Himachal Pradesh Government have started a Language Department for the preservation and development of these Pahari languages and dialects.

### Religion and caste

The religionwise table given below denotes the distribution of population in major religions as registered at the time of each decennial census : -

| Particulars         | 1901   | 1911   | 1921   | 1931     | 1941     | 1951     | 1961     | 1971    |
|---------------------|--------|--------|--------|----------|----------|----------|----------|---------|
| 1                   | 2      | 3      | 4      | 5        | 6        | 7        | 8        | 9       |
| Persons             | 90,873 | 93,107 | 98,000 | 1,00,994 | 1,10,336 | 1,26,099 | 1,58,806 | 194,786 |
| Hindus              | 80,101 | 91,540 | 96,000 | 99,023   | 1,08,375 | 1,24,393 | 1,55,094 | 190,877 |
| Muslims             | 1,487  | 1,406  | 1,559  | 1,458    | 1,498    | 1,394    | 2,078    | 2,523   |
| Sikhs               | 284    | 150    | 437    | 507      | 453      | 307      | 1,593    | 35      |
| Christians          | 1      | 11     | 4      | 6        | 7        | 5        | 35       | —       |
| Buddhists           | —      | —      | —      | —        | —        | —        | 3        | —       |
| Jains               | —      | —      | —      | —        | 3        | —        | 2        | —       |
| Religion not stated | —      | —      | —      | —        | —        | —        | 1        | 6       |

Almost the entire district population constitutes of Hindus, in the general sense of the term. It is further divided between various tribes and castes such as Rajputs, Brahmins, Kanaites, and Harijans. Of late a

tendency is increasingly developing to ignore caste distinctions. Prior to the Independence of the country Muslim population was less than one per cent. Their number further decreased with their migration to the then West Pakistan in the wake of the partition. Sikhs are still less in number hardly deserving any mention. A brief account of the principal communities and tribes and castes and their respective share in the population together with their main features and characteristics is given in the succeeding paragraphs.

The local people consist of the early inhabitants known as the Kanaits, the Rajputs and the Brahmans who came along with the ruling family in the form of conquerors. The Kanaits preponderate and hold about forty-five per cent of the cultivated area. The Brahmans hold about twenty-four per cent, and the Rajputs about sixteen per cent. The other tribes consist of Rathis, Gujjars, Jats, Chamars and Kolis, but the last named are higher in status than the Kolis of the uphill and have of late been accepted into the Rajput fold\*.

**Brahmans**—There are two branches of Brahmans, the Shuklas, and the Krishans. The Shuklas are divided among further sub-castes of Sasani and Dharebar, and the Krishans among Acharaj, Bedwa and Panda. The Sasanis are, generally speaking more orthodox and serve as priests to well-to-do classes, and are all nearly *muafidars* (holders of land, free of revenue). They do not intermarry with any of the Brahmans of the upper hills not even with the Parsramis. The Sasani men will marry Dharebar women, but will not give their own daughters to Dharebars neither eat food cooked by a Dharebar. The Dharebars are the priests of the Kanaits, and practise all their peculiar customs, such as *rit*, widow re-marriage, etc. They plough the land and are not, as a rule *muafidars*.

In fact, their wearing of the *janeo* (sacred thread) is practically the only thing, which distinguishes them from the Kanaits.

Among the Krishan Sub-divisions the position of the Acharaj is slightly better and that of the Bedwa some what worse. The Pandas, who worship the evil stars, Rahu, Ketu and Sanichar, are thought little everywhere.

The first and foremost distinction to be drawn is that between Brahmans who follow, and Brahmans who abstain from agriculture. Those who have never defiled, as they say, their hands with the plough, but have restricted themselves to the legitimate pursuits of their profession, are held to be pure Brahmans; while those who have once descended to the occupation

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\*Nevertheless they are treated legally as scheduled caste like other Kolis.

of husbandry retain indeed the name but are no longer acknowledged by their brethren nor held in the same reverence by the people at large. The purer Brahmans who abstain from agriculture, by no means restrict themselves to sacerdotal duties; they will hold land, though, but will not consent to cultivate it; they lend money; engage in service, work as village functionaries such as lambardars or patwars, and will enter into almost any secular pursuit which promises a subsistence. The majority of them know no language except the current dialect of the hills. Some are sufficiently acquainted with Sanskrit to read the texts appointed for ceremonies; but few indeed are entitled to rank as pandits, or persons learned in the Hindu scriptures. The hill Brahmans will not associate with their own class from the plains. Both profess mutual distrust, and neither will partake of food cooked by the other. The hill Brahman and his womenfolk also eat flesh, which a Brahman of the plains religiously eschews. He is still regarded with considerable reverence. The usual salutations from all classes, the high or the low, are *patri paunda* (I fall at your feet) or *matha teka* (I bow my head in submission). In returning these courtesies, the Brahman says *ashirbad* to higher class such as Rajputs, and *charanjib kalyan* to the other castes.

**Rajputs**—Rajputs generally, do not cultivate land and consequently, they are not industrious. Some of them even do not touch the plough and as a result, they are comparatively less prosperous. The tendency not to touch the plough would now seem to be on the decrease. The Rathis and Rajputs are eager for recruitment in the army. The Rajputs are strong and relatively numerous. They all are nearly of the Chandel tribe and offshoots from the ruling family. They are usually classified as Kahluria Mians and Chandlas. The former are those who have descended from the rajas belonging to, more or less, historical times, and are called Ajmerchandias, Tarachandias, Kalyanchandias, and Sultanchandias, after the raja from whom they sprung. The Chandlas are other Rajputs, whose connection with the ruling family is more remote, though traceable. Their families are named according to the villages held by their founders such as follows :—

Barhial, descended from Raja Udia Chand (1133—1143), Darol, Chandwal, Singhwal, Grewal, Nanglu, Meghpuria, Rajada, Bacholar, Kanhiaru, Raipuria, Doklu, descended from Sangar Chand, the 17th Raja, and Manjheru descended from Mian Mithu, brother and wazir of 23rd Raja; Narinder Chand, whose younger son Nandu founded another Chandla family, the Badhiatu.

The Kahluria Mians do not touch the plough, but with the exception of the Ajmerchandias, are classed as agriculturists. Their women observe *pardah*. The Chandlas plough their lands themselves and are otherwise lax



in the upkeep of their ancestral customs. They are accused of permitting widow re-marriage, their women do not work in the fields. Rajputs are of two classes, superior and inferior, as in the upper hill in Simla district. In former days the Rajputs of the upper and lower hills were chary of inter-marrying with one another, each group claiming itself to be superior to the other. This idea has now broken down.

**Kanaits**—The Kanaits predominate the total population. They are cultivators, generally industrious, but cling to their traditional and primitive agricultural practices, remain behind in learning and were in the last hesitant to follow the new and scientific techniques of agriculture. They were thus lagging behind in comparative development of their lands. The Kanaits and Rajputs are strong and stout in physique. The inhabitants of Dami, pargana Bahadurpur are opulent and of pleasant disposition. They spend freely on bullocks and women and keep the houses neat and clean. Dadhuwalu Kanaits are physically well built but unbending. So are the jubilant Kanaits of pargana Sariun. There are said to be about eighty sub-divisions of Kanaits in this district the more important being Noiru, Maliaru, Dadhuwalu, Bhadogu, Dalgawal, Kotwal, Dagsechi, Jubliani, Sahreli, and Kasoli. Some of these claim to be illegitimate descendants of various rajas, e.g., the Maliarus, whose ancestor is said to have been Tegh Chand, third son of Kahn Chand, the eleventh raja of Bilaspur.

**Rathis**—The Rathis though cultivate their land industriously but the second to Kanaits in matter of putting hard labour. The Rathis of Bilaspur are believed to be descendants of a class of Rajputs. They marry their girls to the lower classes of Rajputs. Their sub-divisions are Mahrani, Baroti, Bendri, Dhuli, Bharol, Lohtri, Rajnal, Gharial, Sin, Basahri, Ikthania, Tania, and Kharial.

The other tribes need no special mention. There are a few Muhammedans, the descendants of certain Chandel Rajputs, who were converted to Islam some generations ago, and some Barhis, Telis, Fakirs, etc.

**Jhinwars**—Jhinwars, a small community, run water-mills and make their easy living as millers. They are primarily water-carriers, water-mill-runners, water-hunters or fishermen as also carriers or bearers in general. In all sorts of social gatherings they were required to render the service of fetching water. With the construction of Gobind Sagar they have now a roaring trade in fishery. They were also required to supply, if so needed, grinding-stone (*sil-batta*). Their females were employed on white-washing, grinding, washing of clothes, cleansing of cereals on the occasions of social gatherings including death and marriages.

With the passage of time these traditional duties and services, in lieu of customary payments, would seem to have very much decreased. They appear to be leaning towards other remunerative occupations like animal husbandry, poultry farming, agriculture etc. due partly to the loss of traditional customs and partly to the opening up of new opportunities of better employment.

**Scheduled Castes**—Among the class of people now branded as scheduled castes, the more important in terms of numerical strength, are Kolis, cobblers, weavers and Dumnas. In the *Assessment Report of Bilaspur, 1933* it is stated that the Gujars, Kolis, Chamars and others rank next to the Kanaits and the Brahmans. The Gujars keep buffaloes and sell milk and ghee. The Kolis and Chamars and the Lohars do their other professional work besides cultivating lands. All as a whole are unsophisticated and truthful. They are more amenable to authority than their neighbours in the adjoining British India territory. But in spite of their simplicity, they are unfortunately litigious. They are, therefore, partly agriculturists and partly craftsmen and, deserve a passing reference.

Out of the total population of the scheduled castes placed at 38,331 in 1961 census, considerable portion comprises Kolis. Prior to the dawn of Independence they were in a poor condition but now they enjoy many facilities. They have comparatively small sized holdings.

Cobblers and weavers who were by the end of 1942 about nineteen per cent of the population owned six per cent of cultivated area. In addition, as occupancy tenants or tenants-at-will, they were directly attached to land and also entitled to their share of produce for the services that they rendered as village craftsmen. The traditional pattern of tenancy has undergone a radical change, for under the new Land Reforms Policy of the Government, all tenants get proprietary rights over the lands being tilled by them. Practically all weavers undertake weaving as a main or a subsidiary occupation. Of the cobblers three to four per cent are shoemakers or indigenous tanners. The numerical strength of cobblers and weavers is about 12 per cent of the total population of the district.

The other scheduled castes found in the district are 1. Balmiki (Bhangi) 2. Bengali 3. Banjara 4. Barad 5. Bhanjra 6. Chamar (Mochi, Ramdasi, Ravidasi) 7. Chhimbe (Dhobi) 8. Chuhre 9. Dagi 10. Daole 11. Darai or Daryai 12. Daul 13. Dhaki or Toori 14. Doom or Doomna (Bhanjra) 15. Hesi 16. Julahe 17. Kabirpanthi (Kee) 18. Khatik 19. Lohar 20. Sarehde 21. Sarde (Sorare or Siryare) and 22. Teli.

The Chhimbe, during the princely regime, used to perform the work of washing of flooring covers, *newar* and clothes, stable and store room etc. But now they pursue their occupation as washermen independently for their livelihood. The Bhanjra used to manufacture bamboo baskets and other bamboo wares, also leaf-plates and leaf-containers. The work of cleanliness had been assigned to Bhanghis (sweepers). The Telis extracted oil at the occasions of social gatherings and marriages. During the princely regime, if and when a mortar was manufactured he was required to bore it.

**Scheduled tribes** —One of the scheduled tribes, namely, the Gujjars, is found inhabiting the district. Their number has been 3,468 according to 1901 census, 3,333 according to 1911 census, 3,441 according to 1921 census, 3,193 according to 1931 census, 3,294 according to 1941 census not recorded in 1951 and 4,213 according to 1961 census and 5236 in 1971 census. Various schemes have been launched in Himachal Pradesh for the improvement of economic and other conditions of this community. But the position of Gujjars inhabiting this district would seem to be somewhat distinct as the Gujjars here, mostly Hindus, unlike the Gujjars residing in other parts of Himachal Pradesh, who are generally Muhammedans, do not seem to pose problems like rehabilitation, settlement and similar others. This appears to be due to the fact that here the Hindu Gujjars have settled on land, pursue agriculture as the main occupation for eking out their subsistence in preference to the pastoral life, generally the occupation of this class of people. In this way they have lost the characteristic of being nomadic. Similarly pastoral life is for them but of secondary importance. Their stationary situation in the villages has extenuated their distinctiveness as a community by itself for they seem to be gradually mixing up with other agricultural communities of the area. Despite all these peculiarities they are scheduled tribe under the Constitution and entitled to all the guaranteed privileges and benefits.

### **Mohammedans**

The demographical statistics compiled at various censuses, in the past reveal that Mohammedan's numerical strength stood at 1,437 in 1901, 1,405 in 1911, 1,559 in 1921, 1,458 in 1931, 1,428 in 1941, 1,394 in 1951, 2,078 in 1961 and 2523 in 1971. This statistical picture obviously indicates that they stand, in number, next only to the Hindus. Originally, it is believed, there were only few Mohammedans being the descendants of certain Chandel Rajputs who were converted to Islam many generations ago. The subsequent growth in their number is the outcome of natural process of procreation rather than immigration. There are no class distraction and recently a tendency has successfully developed to ignore caste distinctions even or to merge it into a single all pervading community. Before 1947, Muslim population was less than one per cent of the total, most of them being converts and following, as they still do, Hindu ways of life.

The Christians, the Buddhists and the Jains are so small in number that no elaborate treatment is called for.

**Sikhism** — Numerically, the persons following the tenets of Sikhism, are not many. Their number stood at 284 in 1901, 150 in 1911, 437 in 1921, 507 in 1931, 453 in 1941, 307 in 1951, 1,593 in 1961 and in the last census held in 1971 it came to 1333. There are now as many as six Gurdwaras all over the district.

1. Gurdwara at Paprola, tahsil Ghamarwin.
2. Gurdwara at Bassi, tahsil Sadr.
3. Gurdwara at Guru Ka Lahaur, tahsil Sadr.
4. Gurdwara at Harnora, tahsil Sadr.
5. Gurdwara at Manjari, tahsil Sadr.
6. Gurdwara at Mehla, tahsil Sadr.

Sikhs also hold in reverence the shrine of Naina Devi Ji where their 10th Guru, Guru Gobind Singh ji worshipped Durga and performed *havan*.

General structures of the population of the district, in terms of religion and, slow-vanishing castes, having been described above it now remains to be seen what are the various religious beliefs and cults prevalent among the local people. It has been already noticed that the major part of this population has faith in Hinduism. Numerous are the cults and beliefs amongst the people here. More important of these are given below. Before describing them it will, however, be relevant to say a word about the animal sacrifices so common in the hills.

Unlike other parts of the hills animal sacrifices are comparative ly rare. There are also no *shands*, as in the Simla district, and the only festival in which animals are sacrificed is the *Dussehra* when goats and buffaloes are offered to Kali. At other times worshippers at a shrine or a temple, with a special object in view, kill a goat but never when the god happens to be Vishnu.

**Cult of Vishnu**—Vishnu is believed to be one of the three members of the most commonly recognised Hindu Trinity—Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh. Vishnu is worshipped in the form of a human being but His names, representing various virtues or characteristics, are a legion. The worship is offered to the image of Vishnu shaped to correspond to one or any of his incarnations. The district being nearer the plains, influence of Vishnuism, as is prevalent in the more intellectually advanced areas, has spread, more or less

in the same form. Vishnu's character for preservation, as developed in the doctrine of his incarnations which means descending to the earth to promote good and suppress evil, when the latter assumes formidable proportions, is accordingly recognised by the people. Out of these incarnations, that of Rama and Krishna are popular and this popularity is perpetuated by offering devotion and worship at various temples and shrines dedicated to these gods. Each sanctuary has its distinctive names derived from anyone of the incarnations of the Vishnu. More important out of the multitude of such sanctum sanctorums are as follows :—

1. Shri Gopal temple at Bilaspur.
2. Thakurdwara at Dobehta, tahsil Sadr.
3. Thakurdwara at Talwar, tahsil Sadr.
4. Thakurdwara at Chandpur, tahsil Sadr.
5. Thakurdwara at Aur, tahsil Ghamarwin.
6. Thakurdwara at Kasol, tahsil Sadr.
7. Thakurdwara at Kanaun, tahsil Sadr.
8. Gopal Krishan temple at Dhawan Kothi, tahsil Sadr.
9. Thakurdwara at Bagi, tahsil Sadr.
10. Gopal temple at Panjgain, tahsil Sadr.
11. Krishan temple at Kathpur, tahsil Sadr.
12. Gopal temple at Solag, tahsil Sadr.
13. Thakurdwara at Makri, tahsil Sadr.
14. Stone cave of Hanuman at Kot, tahsil Sadr.
15. Murli Manohar temple at Bilaspur.
16. Thakurdwara at Sumtehan, tahsil Sadr.

Nar Sing—Of the other avatars of this deity, the noticeable one in the fold of Vishnuism, in this district, is that of Nar Singh, the half man half-lion, a man with a lion head and strength who tore into pieces the tyrant Harnakas (Hiranyakshipa) to save Prahlad, and, is worshipped both by men and women. The belief is that the worship at this temple removes all difficulties and ensures birth of a son.

When a mother or mother-in-law worships Nar Singh her daughter or daughter-in-law must also do so. Barren women consulting a *chela* or *jogi* are usually advised to worship Nar Singh for offsprings. The god is believed to appear in a dream and bless the barren woman with fertility. In case of a woman's sickness the divine wrath of Nar Sing is propitiated with the help of a *chela* the mouth-piece of the deity. The ceremony is conducted as follows :—

On a Sunday, or any fixed day, the deity's mouth-piece comes with a singer of sacred songs, who play on an instrument made of two empty dried gourds connected by a bamboo rod. A wire runs along this rod fastened to its extremities so as to give out a sound when twanged. While singing proceeds the mouth-piece chants some mantras. The woman goes into trance and is supposed to be possessed by Nar Sing. She shakes, shivers and trembles and starts prophesying or advising those who seek cause or remedy to their problems and ailments. The singer accompanied by the mouth-piece sings the following song :—

मोरे नारसिंगा, नरंजनिया बोर  
बीरेन मोही बोलिया, बीरेन मोही बोलिया  
बीरे मोही, बोलिया जोग सारा  
मेरे नारसिंगा, नरंजनिया जो

## I

भई घर मयुरा बिच जब में, गोकल दिया सो भतारा

## II

भई बसुदेव दिया बालकया, जसोधा दिया जाया,

## III

जित्यु कबारियां कन्या, तियु बासा तेरा

## IV

आम्बे भम्बोटन, सोयना, पहाननदोन दे बासा तेरा

## V

पपलोन, पलाबतेन, मालतिया बासा तेरा

## VI

सूहो सूहो पगड़ी कुंजन दो कलगी गल बिच नरमें दा जामा

## Refrain

O My Nar Sing, O great Naranjan.

O thou that hast captivated me : O thou that hast captivated me :

O thou that hast captivated the whole world,

0 my Nar Sing.

0 my Lord Naranjan.

I

0 friend, born in the fort of Mathura,  
that didst become incarnate in Gokula.

II

0 friend, and son of Vasudeva, the child of Yasodha.

III

Where the maids and virgins are, there is thy home.

IV

Thy home is in mangoes, young mangoes, in wells and in tanks.

V

Thy home is in the pipals, young pipals, the jasmines.

VI

Red and red is thy turban flowered and crested,  
fine the robes on thy body.

Many temples dedicated to Nar Sing exist in the district.

The important ones are described below :—

1. Nar Sing temple at Dhaulra, tahsil Sadr.
2. Nar Sing temple at Bhakra, tahsil Sadr.
3. Nar Sing temple at Ghamarwin.
4. Nar Sing temple at Jajjar, tahsil Ghamarwin.
5. Nar Sing temple at Jhanduta, tahsil Ghamarwin.
6. Nar Sing temple at Sunhani, tahsil Sadr.

**Cult of Siva** The attributes of the God Siva, the strange combination of death and mystery, and lust and life are wonderfully mingled with the cult of Siva. To some he appears as an ascetic : powerful in his austerities and terrible in his divine vengeance. To others he is an unseen influence, personified in the *lingam*, without beginning or end, representing also the regenerative power of nature while there are still others who chant his name day and night as Siva. Whatever the case may be, the *linga* or phallus set in a *yoni*, and Siva's vehicle *Nandi*, are the central objects of worship within a structure which constitutes the Siva temple. Siva has many names, the commonest being Mahadeo or Mahadeva, Maheshwara, Shambu, Rudra, Sankara etc.

The river Ganga, which is supposed to flow from His matted lock of hair is specially sacred to His followers. His home is believed to be in the Kailas mountain where He dwells with His consort Parvati who in turn has no less than seven hundred names such as Durga, Kali, Uma, Bhawani etc. In the *Sivratni* ceremony unlike the inhabitants of Simla and Kinnaur districts the people of Bilaspur content themselves with offering milk in His temple. No food, as is customary among the people of higher hills, is given to relatives.

It is tempting to write a short note on the subject of '*lingam*' as more people consider this merely as a symbol of primitive phallic worship. To quote Howard Murphet who in turn has expressed the view-point of a learned Indian, the question what is a Siva *lingam* has been explained in the following words :—

\*"The Siva *lingam* belongs to the class of "natural" Hindu symbols, which are usually mathematical in form. Such symbols are called "natural" because they not only represent a reality, but to some extent are the actual vehicles of the power within that reality. The *lingam* is an ellipsoid. It symbolises Siva-Shakti; that is, the primary polarity principle of positive and negative forces. On this principle of opposites the whole universe is founded."

"Why is an ellipsoid used to symbolise the polarity Principle ? Dr. Taimni explains it in this way. The ultimate reality, the Absolute or Brahman or God, or whatever we are to term it, has no polarity, no pairs of opposites : all principles are balanced and harmonised within it. Therefore, the ultimate reality is represented by the most perfect mathematical figure, the sphere."

"If the centre or the one focal point of the sphere divides itself into two we get the ellipsoid. So this figure gives a symbolic representation of the primary pair of opposites out of the original harmonious one. And from this first duality comes all manifestation, all creation, all the multiplicity of things in the universe. The *lingam* is therefore the basic form lying at the root of all creation, as "Om" is the basic sound".

"To put the matter in Hindu terms ; from the one Brahman emerges Siva-Shakti, the father and mother of all that is, we must note in this connection that Siva is not only an aspect of the Triune Godhead-the destruction-regeneration aspect-he is also the highest God, the father of all the gods, the cosmic logos."

"Like all the gods of Hindu thought, Siva has his consort, *Shakti*, or female aspect. And whereas the male or positive aspect represent.

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\*Murphet, Howard ; Sai Baba, Man of Miracles, 1971, pp. 44-45.



consciousness, the female or negative aspect symbolises power. Both are necessary for creation or manifestation in the planes of matter."

"Some people have considered the *lingam* to be a mere sex symbol. But sex is only one of the many manifestations of the Siva-Shakti principle inherent in the *lingam*. The principle is demonstrated in all the pairs of opposites, and nothing can exist in this phenomenal universe without its opposites, or contrast. In fact, the concept of opposites is basic to our very thinking at this level of consciousness ; we cannot know light without darkness, and so on."

"So to say that Man's worship of this symbol is derived entirely from primitive phallic worship is to take a false view. The *lingam* has a much more profound and significant connotation. The word itself in Sanskrit simply means a symbol or emblem, which in itself suggests that it is a basic, primary symbol. In fact, representing in concrete form the fundamental principle and power of creation, it is considered the highest object of worship on the physical plane, and as it has a true mathematical relationship to the reality it symbolises, it can bring the worshippers *en rapport* with that reality. Just how it does this, Dr. Taimni points out, is a mystery which can only be resolved and understood by one's inner realisation."

"Nevertheless, it is claimed that this sacred ellipsoid of stone or metal does have the occult property of creating a channel between man and the divine power on the inner plane it represents. Through such a channel many blessings, benefits and auspicious conditions will flow to the worshippers. But the mystic link must be established by someone with the necessary understanding of the principles, the knowledge of the forms of the ritual required." The more important temples dedicated to Siva within this district are at Baroha and Baroa in tahsil Ghamarwin which are visited by the people. Besides, the following Siva temples may also be mentioned.

1. Siva temple at Tikri near Panjgain, tahsil Sadr.
2. Siva temple at Dhuni Panjail, tahsil Sadr.
3. Siva temple at Makri, tahsil Sadr.
4. Siva temple at Kheri, tahsil Sadr.
5. Siva temple at Saloa, tahsil Sadr.
6. Siva temple at Malokhar, tahsil Sadr.
7. Siva temple at Tobasangwana, tahsil Sadr.

**Cult of Devi**— Closely connected with the worship of Siva, and quite widely spread, is that of His consort, Devi. The goddess goes by many names, but mostly she is known after the places where temples are dedicated to her, such as, Naina Devi, Badol Devi and the like. As the Devi is a more popular goddess of veneration all over the district and in fact all over the hills it is worthwhile to mention here some of the celebrated shrines dedicated to her. It will be noticed from the account that the worship of Devi assumes many a diverse form. She is believed to have power to inflict as well as remove diseases both in humans and beasts, grant boons, fulfill wishes and aspiration and bless the devotees with happiness and contentment.

In addition to the above Devi temples in Ghamarwin tahsil, there are quite a few such as Bhagwati temple at Jangal Jai Shri Devi, Hari Devi at Lehrisarail, Bhagwati temple at Malari and Naina Devi (different from the famous Naina Devi in Sadr) at Neras, which are frequented by the devotees. In the Sadr tahsil of Bilaspur besides, the Durga temples at Dunglu, Susan and Ghial only the one at Jamthal merits some description.

A legend is current among the local people about the origin of this goddess. A weaver was working in a field when he suddenly struck an idol with his hoe. The idol started bleeding. The weaver was terrified and felt pangs of inner pains for what he had done. The Devi then appeared and asked him not to worry and, as an atonement, to build a temple to her in this village. The weaver, being a poor person, expressed his inability to do so. To erect the temple a person resident of Harnora village, situated nearby, experienced a queer happenings; while asleep on his cot at night he would be thrown down by some invisible power. On occupying the cot again he would again be brought down. This continued for sometime until he prayed to the power that might be there to appear before him. The Devi then obliged him and asked him that he, being a person of means, should erect a temple to house her idol. He agreed and built the temple which is still extant.

The Devi temples at Lakhala and Jala in Sadr are of some importance but not of any legendary or architectural interest.

#### **Naina Devi temple at Naina Devi, tahsil Sadr**

The most notable and, therefore, most frequented temple in the district is that of Shri Naina Devi, situated on the hill of that name, whose dome rise 914.4m above the sacred town of Anandpur Sahib in the Rupnagar district and which is so conspicuous a feature of the landscape viewed from the plains of Rupnagar and Una. The other two mentionable temples are the Deomati temple at Sigirithi, and the Kali temple at Tiun.

**Miscellaneous Cults** — Generally speaking, the popular religion all over the hills has a common character under which the act of worship means, to a common man, the propitiation of a capricious power controlling elements. Although the deities are many yet the main cults comprise Siva, Vishnu and Kali in their various forms. Apart from these there are certain other gods, major as well as minor, that are found being venerated in the area and can be grouped under the category of miscellaneous cults. Mention of a few of these cults would not be misplaced.

Under the category of miscellaneous cults as distinct from the traditional cults of the gods of Hindu pantheon, deification of various heroes and saintly men of the bygone days is prevalent throughout the length and breadth of the district on quite an appreciable scale. These heroes include both the warriors such as the Guga Chauhan and others and also saints of considerable local fame like Baba Balak Nath and others. As in many other parts of Himachal Pradesh, Lakhdata, the bountiful, too has many a follower and devotees. Jhanda, an ancestor of Noiru Rajputs also draws its devotees and commands their respect on account of feats of valour in a battle in the bygone age. Each of these saints and warriors are mentioned in some details in the following pages.

**Baba Balak Nath**— The cult of Baba Balak Nath or Dewat Sidh is very common. The house of this deity is said to be in Chakmoh near the borders of this district. His symbols are two stones carrying impression of human feet. The legend connected with this deity which traces the origin of this cult runs as follows :—

Balak was a Sanyasi boy who was born at Girnar in Kathiawar was endowed with miraculous powers. He made many pilgrimages and eventually wandered to Talai in Bilaspur, where he became a cowherd. One day by the tank, from which the place derives its name, he met a band of saints, whose Mahant or the leader was a Nath. Balak entered into a disputation with this man, and the two agreed to test who was the more powerful of the two as miracle-worker. The Nath threw his stick for Balak to call it back. Balak made it come back floating in air. Balak then threw his stick but the Nath could not call it back. The saints seeing a greater than their greatest endeavoured to persuade Balak to become one of them, and, when he refused, thought of detaining him by force. Balak fled and jumped into the tank followed by the Nath. Both disappeared but were seen a little later to emerge from a cave in a hill about five kilometres off, near Chakmoh. The saints went to the place, but when they got there the two had once more vanished and were never seen again. In course of time the cave became sacred, and Balak and Nath came to be worshipped as one deity under the name Balak Nath or Dewat Sidh.

The symbol of Balak Nath or Dewat Sidh are to be seen in most villages, and in some places alongside every house. Prayers and offerings are made on the first Sunday of each *Blkrami* month. A large loaf is made and distributed among the worshippers. A favourite type of offering is a small pair of paten. Frequently a silvery charm is hung round the neck of a child in the name of Dewat Sidh, and worn by him till the day of his death. The following places of worship dedicated to Baba Balak Nath and other Sidhs command a good deal of name and fame in the localities in which these are situated—Baba Balak Nath Sthan at Bhapral and his temple at Changar Talai in Ghamarwin tahsil. In Sadr the places are Rang Nath temple in Bilaspur proper, Sidh temple at Bhail, Dhar, Khorani and Talwar.

**Deo Sur**—In Bilaspur, a greater than Nar Sing Bir, already, mentioned is Deo Sur, who seems to possess the same attributes. He is said to be the master and Nar Sing Bir his servant. He is universally accepted as the deity of the women. The ritual performed consists of the women sitting in rows while a drum is beaten. During the drumming they sway their head from side to side, and when it stops they sit still. This is evidently a representation of the tremors caused by the entering in of the spirit of the god, such as takes place at *baithak* of Nar Singh. It is supposed that any woman once she becomes a devotee of Sur must attend one of these fairs lest she is visited with misfortune. Like Dewat Sidh, Sur is worshipped on the first Sunday of the month.

**Lakhdata**— The saint Lakhdata is revered and festivals in his honour are celebrated collectively or individually. The fair is often wound with a wrestling match. It is for some reason common for supplicants to vow a wrestling match to Lakhdata, whose proper name, by the way is Sakhi Sarwar Sultan. Wrestling matches are often held during the summer season in his honour. Lakhdata, a legendary saint, has a grave in Pir Panduri in Hoshiarpur district and another grave in Pir Bihanu, Pargana Tiun and at Than in Pargana Baseh tahsil Ghamarwin. At Pir Bihanu lying at the border of Suket (Mandi district) a big fair is held during the rainy season, where the devotees arrange wrestling matches to propitiate this deity.

**Guga Pir**— Cult of Guga has a strong hold on the minds of people in the area. Guga Pir has a little shrine in almost every village, containing the image of Guga mounted on a horse and supposed to be specially efficacious for snake bites. His cult in this district is similar to that prevalent all over the Punjab and Haryana.

The legend connected with him runs below. Somewhere in the *Dakhan* (South) there were two issueless sisters, Bachla and Kachla, wives of a Chauhan Rajput named, Dev Raj. In the hope of begetting an issue

Bachla went, one day, to the shrine of **Gorakhnath** and was told to come again when she would be given a fruit to eat after which a child would be assured to her. Kachla the sister of Bachla overheard this promise and went next day to the shrine in the guise and dress of Bachla. She received and ate the fruit. When Bachla went afterwards she found that her sister had already stolen her blessings. Bachla was, however, given another fruit half of which she ate and the other half she gave to the mare she was riding. To Kachla was born a daughter Gugri, to Bachla a son, Guga, and the mare in turn had a foal. Guga and this foal were brought up together. When Guga attained manhood he heard the fame of a beautiful maiden, and riding the horse (his foster brother) he went to woo her. For years he lived with her, being changed by day by the sorcery of the country to a sheep, and by night resuming the form of a man. In his absence a pretender attempted to force his claim to force an entrance to the palace. The door-keeper who had grown blind ever since Guga's departure refused him admittance disbelieving his assertion that he was Guga. The door-keeper asserted that on Guga's return he would have received his sight. Ultimately being hard pressed, his cousin Gugri sent a letter by the hand of a brahman to Guga in Bangahal. He, realising the state of affairs, abandoned his life of pleasure and with the help of the brahman escaped from the sorcery that bound him. By the same aid the horse that had grown old and thin was restored, and Guga once more mounted his steed and reached his home town. On his return home the door-keeper regained his eye-sight and Guga and Gugri both performed miracles. They fought the enemies and once Guga even fought for some time after he had lost his head. After death he was venerated as god, and has thereafter been always represented on horseback. Any person suffering from a snake-bite is usually taken to a Guga shrine, where some cases get cured. The others who die are supposed to have committed some deadly sins from which the only redemption was death.

There are other different versions of the legend of Guga current amongst people. It is, therefore, difficult to get at the truth. The more the enquiry the greater becomes the confusion. Here is another version which would seem to differ, not in theme but in details, from the legend given above.

In the ancient times the rana of Marudesh had two ranis named Kachla and Bachla, both sterile. The ranis were keen to have issues. At the sametime there lived a guru named Gorakh. Once the ranis went to the guru and requested him to grant boon to enable them to have issues. The guru bade them to come the next day duly bathed and cleaned. Out of the two Kachla was more shrewd and next day she reached the guru earlier than Bachla. The guru gave her two mangoes to eat saying that that would bring her two sons. Then reached Bachla with a similar hope but the guru told her that

he had only two mangoes which were given to Kachla and none was left with him now. She beseeched him with prayers and supplications whereupon the guru was pleased to produce another mango telling that on eating the mango she would give birth to a brave son who would prove to be the death of Kachla's sons.

In due course of time both the ranis conceived; the elder, Kachla, bore two sons, Arjun and Surjan; the younger rani, Bachla gave birth to a son, who on the advice of the astrologers, was named Guga. The legend goes on that when Guga was born the blind regained their sight, deaf got back their audibility and the lames were restored with their lost limbs. His birth was, therefore, hailed as divine and celebrated with great pleasure. The elder rani became envious of Guga and started hatching designs to finish him to clear the way for her sons to the throne. To gain her evil objective the rani invoked the help of the snake king (Basuki Nag) who deputed his son to fulfil the desire of Kachla. The Guga, brave as he was, killed the son of this snake king who then came forward himself to bite Guga while he was swinging on a *jhula*. But Guga caught the Nag and was about to kill him when the snake king implored mercy and begged for life. This request was granted by Guga magnanimously. The serpent king, however, felt slighted and to avenge himself, he summoned all the serpents on the earth and deputed them to kill Guga. The Guga, nevertheless, imprisoned all the snakes within a charmed circle, for a week.

It is a popular belief, current even today, that during the period of one week in the rainy season when the festival of Guga is on, the snakes either do not bite any man or even if they do the poison has no adverse effect.

Subsequently a fight ensued between Guga on one side and Arjun and Surjan on the other to capture the ancestral throne. Guga was ultimately triumphant and is, therefore venerated and is praised in folk songs by the people to perpetuate the memory of his valorous deeds.

The people entertain a belief that propitiation of Guga would rid them of the dangers of snake bites and evil spirits. Given below is a specimen of the songs of Guga as is current in the Bilaspur District.

हुकम जे होंदा पंज पण्डवा  
तुसे भी लड़ाईयां जो आवणा,  
हुकम होन्दा ऐववाजा पोरा  
तू भी लड़ाईयां जो आवणा,  
दम-दम गुगा मण्डली  
दम-दम कानीं स्यात,

जित्ये गुगा जमया

उत्थे रखना थान ।

Some of the older and important temples dedicated to Guga may be mentioned now.

#### **Guga temple at Bhatehr Uparli, tahsil Sadr**

The sanctum stands on one side of the village in the cultivated fields with a large pipal (*Ficus religiosa*) tree and a *bowli* in its vicinity. The place falls near the Simla-Bilaspur-Mandi road and the Bilaspur town is twenty-nine kilometres further from it. During the month of *Asuj* on the day of *Guga naumi*, a fair takes place here and is attended by about five to six thousand people.

The general belief that snake-bites are averted or counterbalanced by propitiation of Guga is stretched further to a point of incredulity in that it is said that on the day of *mele* serpents show themselves near the temple. Not only snake-bites but also worms in wounds in the animals as also fleas can, it is believed, be removed by worshipping Guga. If a vow or promise to the deity is not fulfilled the offender will either be bitten by a snake or snake would appear in his residential place or some other calamity would befall him. The following places have a temple or place assigned to the deity :—

1. Guga *sthan* at Dhar, tahsil Sadr.
2. Guga temple at Chakrana, tahsil Ghamarwin.
3. Guga temple at Domehr, tahsil Ghamarwin.
4. Guga temple at Ladda, tahsil Ghamarwin.
5. Guga *sthan* at Tiaman, tahsil Sadr.
6. Guga temple at Gherwin, tahsil Ghamarwin.

#### **Markanday temple at Makri, tahsil Sadr**

This temple dedicated to the renowned sage Markanday is situated in the hamlet of Makri at a distance of 2.4 km from Jukhala village, approachable by Brahmpukhar-Jukhala road. The tradition holds it to be the birth place of sage Markanday said to be a contemporary of sage Vyas. A legend goes that a cowherd of village Makri noticed a cow entering the cave daily and returning after some time. Once he followed the cow and to his surprise saw a sage performing *havan* inside the cave. The sage asked the cause of his visit. The cowherd bewailed his poverty. The sage gave him a handful

of rice. The cowherd tied the rice in a piece of cloth but later spurned the gift of rice and threw them away. A few grains, however, remained stuck in the piece of cloth. When he came out of the cave; he found that the few grains of rice had turned into grains of gold. He was then tempted and ran back to collect the thrown rice but was disappointed to find that a part of the cave had slid down and blocked the way. According to another version it is also said that father of Markanday used to live here. He performed penance to appease Brahma for the sake of a son. His prayers were rewarded and he was blessed with a son. From then on people are rewarded with sons, and, many of the diseases are cured by having a dip in this spring near the cave.

### **Khanmukheswar temple, tahsil Sadr**

There are conflicting versions about the origin of this temple. According to one, the temple was constructed in the memory of Kartikeya the eldest son of Siva, who was deprived of the throne in preference to Ganesh, the second son. Because of the partiality of Sati Parvati towards Ganesh, Kartikeya was cheated of his rights who was enraged and vowed to remain celibate. He took a vow that he would never bear the sight of a woman and that if any woman were to come across him she would turn barren for seven births on end. Under the dread of this curse, no woman ever visited this temple until about thirty years ago.

The second version is that while Siva was reciting *Amarkatha* to Parvati and she had fallen asleep, a parrot, nestling in the tree above started repeating *aye*. At the end of the story when the God Siva broke his trance, he found Parvati fast asleep. He then looked for the repeater of *aye*. The parrot being thus detected flew away to save its life with Siva in his pursuit. The parrot eventually entered sage Vyas cave, entered his body of the sage's pregnant wife and was born as Sukh Dev. The Siva did not enter the cave for fear of the wrath of the sage Vyas, and therefore, seated himself at a place known as Khanmukheswar and himself went into trance.

### **MANNERS AND CUSTOMS-SUPERSTITIONS AND BELIEFS**

Superstitions influence a major part of the life of the simple folks and in some cases these are observed as religious beliefs. For example a devout zemindar will not drink or use the milk of newly calved cow, until he has made butter of the beestings and offered it to his deity. A few other superstitions and beliefs are given below :

*Jathera* : It is a form of ancestral worship. A little shrine erected to the memory of some notable ancestor, takes the place of the *pap-ka-chautra* but the influence of the departed is thought to be benevolent, not malevolent. On any day auspicious to the family, such as the birth of a child, a brahman is taken to the shrine, prayers are offered, a lamp lighted



and incense burnt.

### Sati stones

There are stones raised in the memory of women who burnt themselves on the pyres of their husbands. These stones have a somewhat more sinister significance. The spirit of the woman is supposed to be capable of inflicting injury on her descendants, and has therefore, to be propitiated with prayers on every *Sankrant* (first day of the month of *Bikrami era*) and on other auspicious days.

### Oaths

Oaths are of the same description, as are equally respected all over the hills. The *gatti* oath sworn in a temple against the authority of an official is called *chawal*.

### Omens

Omens widely believed and observed in the past are now being disregarded in the strain and stress of modern life. Some of them, though still current may be mentioned. To come across an empty pitcher or any other empty utensil, while setting out on a journey, is regarded an unfavourable sign because it portends failure in the work for which the person has set out. To meet a woman with her head uncovered at the time of proceeding on a journey is ominous. Sound by a sparrow hawk (*papiha*), from a tree, while starting on a journey is likewise regarded inauspicious. So is the sneezing before or at the start of a work or undertaking a journey. To come face to face with a brahmin or a widow or a goldsmith or a barber or weaver when setting out a journey is regarded an unfavourable omen and those strongly afflicted by the superstitions, go to the extent of turning back. This superstitious belief has passed into a local saying as :

खाली घड़ा, विधवा नार,  
कुफर्मी ब्राह्मण और चौथा मिले सुनार,  
तो घर बैठे खाइ लेनो हार,  
एक मिले नाइ या मिली जाये जुलाहा ता मो तनो हार ।

Hair cutting on Tuesday and Saturday is regarded inauspicious because it ends either in conviction by a court or a fine or exile. The warning against transgression of the rule finds expression in the following saying :

मंगले शनिचरे कहे केश ।  
इतो राजा छुटो देश ।

The name of a particular village or a person considered inauspicious is uttered by omitting the cognomen, and substituting or adding to it the word *Kara* such as a village *Dara* will be called as *Dara Kara* and a *Gobind Ram* as *Gobind Kara*. To disregard this rule is supposed to end in a bad day. It is generally believed that if a pitcher is broken and, a pyre made on Sunday, there will be three repetitions i.e. three pitchers will break and three persons will die. The howling of a jackal is regarded a bad omen, whereas crowing of a crow as a good sign. Tuesday is regarded an auspicious day throughout the district. According to the local belief, *Raja Ali Dev* of *Chanderi*, the founder of the ruling dynasty of erstwhile *Bilaspur State* completely brought the State under his suzerainty on this day. Due to this incident it is supposed to bring success in any project. On the first Tuesday of the month, the worship of gods and goddesses including *Ali Dev* is performed.

### Warding off *Bhoots*

Whenever any person, especially in the rural areas, is taken ill the foremost measure to rid him of the ailment is the traditional method of warding off the *bhoot* (evil spirit), supposed to be the cause of his illness. The rituals for warding off a ghost are rather elaborate. A *chela* supposed to be deft in the art of warding off a *bhoot* is called in by the family members of the ailing person. The *chela*, first of all, endeavours in his own way, to ascertain whether the devil is a great one or a small one. If it happens to be a great one a broken piece of any earthen vessel containing embers is brought forth and waived over the head of the patient accompanied by some weird incantation. After this performance the piece of pitcher is taken away to a place where four paths converge or to a spring of water in the darkness of the night and thrown away. If someone chances to cross the path of the person carrying the piece of earthen pot towards its goal he is supposed to contract the disease of the patient or in other words it is believed that the *bhoot* would leave the patient and pass over to the person so met. Occasionally such a person, being conscious of what he has come across and seen, is so much frightened that he actually falls ill and in some cases, may die. After this ceremonial on the following Tuesday or Saturday a goat or a cock is also sacrificed.

If this ceremonial does not result in curing the patient and the disease gets acute and serious a *khel* (inviting the god through the medium of a person) is organised. The patient is flooded with the smoke of clove burnt in the fire and in front of him a metal plate set on a pitcher is waved vigorously. The *chela* utters *bharni* (a kind of song) in which a particular god or goddess is recalled and invited to reveal the disease through the patient. The gods so invoked include *Nar Singh*, *Durga* and *Bhairon*. The tempo of the song is gradually accelerated to crescendo and the patient starts shaking and goes in a sort of trance. He takes hold of a bunch of iron chains with which he

beats his back and thereafter answers the questions put to him by the chela. In this process of, what may be called hypnotism, the patient, by continuous leading questions, is made to admit or believe that certain person had given him something to eat due to which he was taken ill. He is then made to gorge out the evil enchanted eatables.

### *Khot*

*Khot* or vice also leads to certain sudden diseases and difficulties. The causes of *khot* are varied such as the neglect to propitiate any deity in time or to make a vow in the name of a deity with certain doubts and to make mistakes in the propitiation or a vow to the deity. When a patient does not get relief in spite of remedies and other measures the cause of ailment is suspected to be the *khot*. To counteract the effect of *khot* a *khel*, as described earlier, may be organised. In the alternative an experienced man may be called in to ascertain the effect of *khot* by means of a method known *akhwan*. *Akhwan* comprises the ascertainment of *khot* by means of grains of wheat. What it has been found out that the sin or the vice has been committed against such and such a deity a promise is wrested from the patient to make offerings of varied degrees to the offended deity. This vow is accompanied by the burning of incense.

### Birth customs

A woman has to be in the lower storey of a house at the time of birth of her child. During the period of impurity (*sutak*) (about 11 days) the mother remains segregated in the lower storey and nobody partakes of any food or drink from the house except near relatives or the people belonging to the so called lower castes. In the well-to-do families, if the child is a boy, four *gontralas* or birth feasts are held after certain intervals prescribed for the caste to which the parents belong. If the parents happened to be well-to-do the brahman casts the nativity of the child at the very hour of the birth but in cases of ordinary people preparation of horoscope is often dispensed with altogether. No particular notice is taken of the birth of a female child although occasionally a small feast may be given to brahmans and members of the brotherhood but there are no *gontralas*. The four *gontrala* feasts are held in the lower parts of the district irrespective of whether the child is male or female. Naming ceremony and starting the child on cereals are the same as are observed among Hindus all over the country except with the variation that every clan or even a household has their own family or clan gods and goddesses. In case the birth of the first male child has been secured by means of a vow to a particular deity the ceremony has necessarily to take place at the shrine of such deity otherwise the performance takes place in the abode of tutelary god. The ceremony is performed almost by all sections of the population and, places better known for the performance are such as Sagirthi, Naina Devi and Markanda.

The other ceremonies like wearing of the sacred thread, starting of education, marriage, death etc. are also according to Hindu beliefs and scriptures and need not be mentioned in detail. These are however getting more and more simpler and shorn of avoidable rituals and expenditure. In fact people were to some extent exploited by the priestly class and with the opening up of the interior and spread of education the outmoded beliefs and superstitions are yielding place to new ideas. The main faith in the Hindu scriptures remains firm, only a better understanding is dawning on the people of the district.

### Inter-caste relations

The four *Varnas* namely the Brahmans, the Kashtris, the Vaish and the Sudras are further split up in numerous castes and sub-castes. The real racial stock of the district among the Hindus is comprised of the Shukal and the Krishan Brahmans, Rajputs, Kanaitis, Rathis, Jhinwars, Gujjars, Jats, Kolis, Cobblers, Barhis, Balmiki (Chura or Bhangi), Bangali, Banjara, Barad, Bhanjra, Chamar (Mochi, Ramdasi, Ravidasi), Chhimbe (dhobi), Chuhre, Dagi, Daole, Darai or Daryai, Daula, Dhaki or Toori, Doom or Doomna, Dumna (Bhanjra), Hesi, Julahe, Kabirpanthi (Julaha or Kear), Khatik, Lohar, Sarehde, Sarde (Sarare or Sinyre) and Teli. The norms of society as well as relative social position *inter se* finds disparity not only from caste to caste but in certain cases, from family to family, determined, not so much by the general status of the caste, but by the financial position of the family by the profession it has adopted.

Inter-caste relationship must be viewed from two different angles, namely, the inter-caste unity or dependence and the inter-caste discrimination. The geographical situations of various villages scattered all over the area tends to show that in the past when these villages were first founded the settlers perforce, because of the undeveloped and primitive state of communications etc., were a self sufficient unit of habitation. This necessity, it can be imagined, gave rise to an accommodating and tolerant spirit among the settlers in respect of all castes. Each caste was a specific functional group and each group was in need of the other group for providing various commodities and services and thus a house or two belonging to each caste came to be established into a particular village. This common characteristic of village settlement continued apparently for ages. An example or two would illustrate the point. Priestly Brahmans and warrior Rajputs who did not plough were in need of foodgrains and thus they accommodated the Kanaitis or the Rathis or such other classes who pursued agriculture. All the foregoing classes were in need of certain creature comfort including clothes, shoes etc. These were provided by the weavers and the cobblers who were readily accommodated in this or that part of a village. For certain purposes, like doing away with dead animals scheduled castes were in demand and they

too were given accommodation in the same village. In this way each caste being dependent, for one thing or the other, on the next caste gave rise to a high degree of tolerance among the village community and even a certain amount of element of mutual regard. This system of caste hierarchy would seem to have worked well till recent times and even now there are places where no deviation in this traditional system has crept in.

Although different castes peacefully dwelling in the village were ostensibly like different gems set in the same ornament enhancing its value and look yet every caste like every gem had its own distinct and separate entity, colour and characteristic which were incapable of being separated from them. As the time rolled on these distinction-marks, somehow or the other, became deeper and the element of discrimination started to get an upper hand. The mutual inter-dependence started to be changed to subjugation and subordination of the less fortunates by the economically and socially superior castes. Though the so called lower classes continued to remain by far faithful and loyal to the so called higher classes but the latter with better economic means and higher social status started to exploitation and riding roughshod over the menial classes created a sense of grievance with certain repercussions that have come about now.

## SOCIAL LIFE

### Property and inheritance

Bilaspur has the same joint family system as elsewhere among the Hindus though of late, it appears to be disintegrating because of the economic stress and strain of living. Another contributory factor is the rapid growth of population.

During the regime of the erstwhile State the principles governing the inheritance were regulated by the patriarchal system. In case of those who died heirless leaving no reversioners within five degrees, their lands and property were escheated in favour of the State. The ruler was then empowered to dispose of the escheated land according to his whims and wills. In most cases the lands were given on a *nazrana* to a few sycophants and if no such worthwhile stooge were available, the property was auctioned. After 1938 rules were framed by the ruler prohibiting auctioning of the escheated land. It was laid down that the property was to be offered first to the nearest reversioners after the fifth degree and in case there was no reversioner or in case of refusal by such a reversioner, the property was then by right given to the cultivators of the village on payment of some consideration money (*nazranas*).

The above regulations were superseded by the enforcement of the *Hindu Succession Act of 1956*. The provisions of the Act are well-known to call for

repetition.

As has been stated above the rigidity of the joint family system was loosened through an interplay of economic forces and in case of Bilaspur particularly due to the displacement of the families owing to the construction of Bhakra Dam.

### **Marriage and morals**

**Monogamy :** Although no survey has ever taken place for ascertaining percentage of the monogamous families in the district, yet generally speaking an overwhelming majority is monogamous and a second marriage is looked down with some indignation if not di favour. A potent check on the tendency towards having more than one wife is also afforded by the economic position of the people.

### **Polygamy**

Although there was, in the past, no legal restriction on the number of wives a Hindu might take, yet in practice the incidence of plurality of wives in this district has been rather rare. Such cases include either affluent persons indulging in the luxury of taking a second wife during the life time of the first or because a person who due to sterility of his existing wife is obliged to perform a second marriage. In some cases, those who can afford take the second wife as an additional helping hand. Now of course the *Hindu Marriage Act, 1955* has made bigamy illegal and punishable.

### **Polyandry**

This system of marriage was never prevalent and is not to be found in any part of the district.

### **Traditional restrictions on marital alliances**

Traditional restrictions on matrimonial alliances, it appears, have their roots in the casteism, blood relationship, geo-economic settings and socio-economic conditions of the people. Generally speaking, all castes and sub-castes are endogamous and as a rule, perform marriages within the caste or sub-caste, as the case may be. Thus Rajputs marry among the Rajputs and Brahmans give their daughters to and take the daughters of Brahmans and so on. To contract a marriage outside the caste is usually resented. These age-old taboos due to the castes are still being respected and the result is that incidence of intercaste marriage so far is quite insignificant. Inter-religious marriages are very very rare. Another restricted field of marriage is the kinship. It extends to different degrees through different kins. A new but quite effective consideration namely, to contract marriage with better socio-economic standard impliedly approximating to a restriction on marriage alliance has raised its head pre-

venting many matrimonial ties to take place which in the past could have taken place without the least ado. Last of all geo-economic circumstances of the people play their role in establishing or restricting marriage ties. Traditionally a marriage within the same village, otherwise capable of being contracted is generally avoided. People dwelling on different altitudes, in the hills or in the lower valleys, would prefer to establish matrimonial ties in their respective regions, though this restriction based on geo-economic condition may in many cases be overlooked. Of the eight distinct forms of marriage recognised by the "sutrah" which cover all possible means by which union can be effected between a man and a woman, those followed in this district include *biah* or regular marriage in accordance with the *Shastras*; *jhajra*, *rit* marriage by purchase, *asura* marriage locally called *gadar* or *paraina*. *Biah* is regarded as the best form. It is usual for all Kanaitis to marry their first wife in *biah* i. e. the regular form according to the *Shastras* and only to employ the *jhajra* and other customary ceremonies for subsequent marriages. If a man, marries by *karewa* or by payment of *rit* a pregnant woman, the off-spring, if born in his house, belongs to its actual father. Similarly, if a wife leaves her husband, returns to her father's house, and there becomes pregnant, the child is illegitimate in any case.

Betrothal is the first rite preparatory to the marriage. Betrothals are usually of two kinds. The orthodox form in accordance with Hindu ritual is *barni*. The other form *sagai* or *sota* is adopted by the Kanaitis and other castes. The father of the boy sends a few ornaments or a rupee or two to the bride's parents by the hand of a priest or a relation. If the presents are accepted and the messenger is offered and takes food in the girl's house, the contract is effected. A betrothal may be cancelled, but the party, at whose instance this is done, must repay all the expenses incurred in connection with the ceremony. Betrothal is followed, sooner or later, according as the age of the marrying parties, may warrant, by marriage on a date appointed by the family priest. Intimation of the date together with invitation to attend the marriage is sent to the relations of the respective parties through the family priest or his representative. The priest or his nominee, on delivery of the invitation, receives in lieu of his services, some grains or cash from each household visited by him. Then follow the ritual bath and oil ceremony at the respective houses of the groom and the bride. The marriage procession starts from groom side. The *milni* and actual marriage ceremony customs are almost the same as prevalent among Hindus elsewhere with slight variation suiting local condition. Some gifts, locally known as *gaochara*, generally consisting of some cash and clothes and other presents to the bridegroom are given. The gifts are bestowed and bridegroom's forehead marked with vermilion to the accompaniment of mantras. These gifts are carried in a platter or plate which is emptied and returned. As a rule the platter is never returned empty. Some cash is put into it. The cash is a tip to the priest. After this the *barat* is served with tea and then meals, excepting the bride-

groom who is required to be on fast provided there is ample time for *lagan*. When the *Barat* visits the bride's house the females sing song.

*Milni* (to meet) is now performed with the girl's party standing on one side and the boy's on the other in an open space. This ceremony is performed by the kinsmen of the bride and the bridegroom along with the marriage party. They embrace each other, and coins are waved over the heads of the more prominent persons and given away to the barber.

The family priest more or less conversant with the scriptures, ignites the sacred fire and pours into it with due mantras a libation of clarified butter etc. Then the father of the bride welcomes the bridegroom in the prescribed form by offering water to wash his feet and by the well-known oblation called the *arghya*. He then gives his daughter's hand to the boy thrice, reciting a holy mantra. This time both the boy and girl are installed on two separate stools (*patra*) and for the first time see each other's faces. The boy afterwards worships according to the ordinance the sacred fire and taking his wife's hand by general invocation prays through the priest to the principal deity that they both may pass their lives in comfort, faithful to each other, and that their union may be blessed with healthy children. Both then walk round the nuptial fire, the wife holding the hem of her husband's garments, to call to witness that effulgent light which pervades every quarter of the globe, that neither in thought, deed or word will either swerve from the path of duty. The husband then sprinkles holy water on his wife, and invokes the element that she may ever remain chaste and gentle and that her eyes, heart and mind may be his and his hers always. This rite is also known as *sankalp dena* or *kanya dan*.

**Gift giving :** On the wedding day the invited relatives start pouring in with a customary gift of ghee and grains along with some cash ranging between two to five rupees according as the invitee is liable to give on reciprocal basis to the bride's family. This gift or *niota* is a strong cementing force between the community or any part of it and non-payment of this customary due is regarded as an act of hostility and renders the tie of relationship ineffective. The payment is, therefore, made invariably without fail. Custom of giving gift on the bridegroom's side is also almost the same as on the bride's side.

#### **Stay at bride's house**

The period of the stay at the bride's place is long or short according as the host is financially capable of entertaining them. Though, as a rule, the stay is seldom extended beyond one day in the case of opulent parties and, in the case of the commoners and the poorer sections, the marriage party returns the same day.

**Mukhlawa :** After a stay of five days at her husband's house the bride



returns to her parents on a date fixed by the priest. The husband with some people, after a period not exceeding a year from the date of marriage, goes to take her back. This rite is called *muklawā* and after this the bride settles in her husband's house permanently. As a rule, the bride and bridegroom, do not dwell together in the month of *Bhādon* during the first year of their marriage and the bride invariably returns to her parents.

*Jhajra, gaḷar or paraina* : The other two forms *jhajra* and *gaḍar* or *paraina* are informal and unorthodox. The bridegroom sends one or two men to fetch the bride, who comes attended by a party of her own relatives and friends. On arriving at the bridegroom's house, a basket of wheat or rice, a *lota* of water, and a lamp are placed in front of the door, and the bride is required to worship these, and, the threshold. She is then conducted into the house and worships the hearth and Ganesh.

In the *jhajra* ceremony the worship of Ganesh is essential. If this is dispensed with, the ceremony is *gaḍar*. There is no other distinction between the two forms. The bridegroom, if well-to-do, gives a feast, attended by a representative of every house in the village, and customary fees are given to the priest, the barber, musicians, and village menials. Three days later, the bride's parents visit the newly married couple bringing with them some food. The visit is returned by the bridegroom three days after the above visit.

Generally the poorer section, especially the scheduled castes, demand from the bridegroom's side some cash, varying from individual to individual, in lieu of their daughter before the marriage is celebrated. They being economically backward cannot afford the marriage expenses.

The pernicious customs like buying and selling of women, early marriage, and the treatment of women as chattel prevalent among all classes, excepting Rajputs and Brahmins, are more or less on the wane.

*Rit*—The *rit* system is applicable to *jhajra* and *gaḍar* or *paraina* marriages. *Rit* is the name applied in this district to the value of clothes and ornaments given to the bride by her husband at the time of marriage including other expenses of the marriage. A husband can repudiate his wife by taking away the clothes and ornaments given by him to her. If a wife wishes to leave her husband the marriage can be annulled by the latter's acceptance of *rit*. Certain women are either habitual or are forced to change their husbands frequently. But a woman can get her release only on payment of *rit* viz, an amount generally equivalent to the marriage expenditure incurred by the former husband but it rests at the discretion of the individual husband. A person who fails to marry in a regular way or who falls in love with a married woman and wants to marry her, they resort to *rit*. But this system is mostly prevalent among the so-called lower castes and the amount paid does not exceed normally five hundred rupees. Now the device to get

rid of the wedlock is generally by means of a divorce, through the court of law, rather than by *rit* which system would seem gradually dying. In earlier times the erstwhile State used to get some commission on the *rit* money but subsequently the *rit* system ceased to be recognised.

### Dowry

Strictly speaking there does not exist, at least among the common people, the obnoxious system of dowry in the sense it is current amongst many people in the plains. No compulsory cash payment is enforced upon the parents of the bride by the bridegrooms' side. This, however, may not be taken to mean that the bride is sent by her parents bare-handed. Out of their parental affection for the daughter and also because of absence, in the past, of law entitling a daughter to inherit any part of her ancestral property, the parents, rich or poor, do not spare any means to provide their departing daughter with as many necessities of life in the shape of cash, clothes, ornaments, implements, furniture and even domestic animals, as possible with the solemn hope that she might not feel the want of even a trifling in the new and strange house of her in-laws. These gifts, whether of high or of little value, are known as *daz dan* or *dahej* but these terms and expressions are absolutely un-connected with the popularly despised "dowry".

According to the prevailing customs no marriage is complete, in fact no marriage can take place unless presided over or conducted by a priest who must be paid his fees, besides, his sharing in all the feasts. Poverty or prosperity, capacity or incapacity, labour or no labour, as it suits the priest, are no considerations to withhold the payment due to the priest.

Old ideas are changing fast and orthodoxy is fighting a losing battle. Inter-caste marriages, however, are rare and still looked down upon. No civil marriage has been registered in this district.

### Marital age

According to the *Child Marriage Restraint Act* which is in force in the district the marital age for boys is eighteen years and above and for girls fourteen years and above. Departure from these ages can not be ruled out because the law would rarely be set in motion.

### Widow remarriage

Almost all the Hindu law givers of the ancient time, though do not entirely prohibit widow re-marriage yet speak of it disapprovingly. Traditional social restriction, deep rooted as it is, continues to be strong on widow re-marriage and instances are few and far between when a widow was successful in contracting a marriage especially among the Brahmans and Rajputs. The age-old belief, current among them would discourage any person to take

a widow as a wife and, therefore, the barrier of social custom remains uncrossed from either side. This situation is understandable from the fact that a widower too finds it hard to get a wife. Nevertheless a few young persons, influenced by the changing trends of the time, modern and rather western ideology, are making bold of themselves in the matter of widow-re-marriages. But this is nothing more than a scratch on the earth and the lot of the widows and widowers is still none the better. Most of them are subject to the suffering of forced state of unmarried life till they live. The trend amongst the castes other than the Brahmans and the Rajputs is, however, different, inasmuch as no restrictions regarding re-marriages of widows and widowers are current amongst them and such re-marriages are quite common.

### **Divorce**

Divorce, as is now understood under the *Hindu Marriage Act of 1955*, was by and large unknown in the past and was even looked upon with disfavour. Nevertheless dissolution of marriage was not uncommon as would have been seen from *gadar* or *paraina* forms of marriage. During the recent years some cases have been filed in the civil courts seeking divorce, and this reveals that people are resorting to legal procedure for seeking separation as against the old custom.

### **Economic dependence of women and their place in the society**

It is in very few cases that women have striven to be independent economically though economic pressure is fast driving them to look after themselves. The spread of education has given the women folk a new dignity and social status but much ground remains to be covered. Incidence of prostitution and traffic in women is practically non-existent.

### **Drinking**

In the absence of data based on a systematic survey about the incidence of drinking habits it is well-nigh hard to express any categorical or conclusive opinion in the matter. The other and the only basis for considering the extent of alcoholism among the people is the amount of annual revenue from excise, of which data is available since 1921-22 to 1942-43 given in chapter XI of this volume. The statistics reveal unmistakably that the revenue on account of excise which stood at Rs. 3,200 in 1921-22 touched the figure of Rs. 15,357 in 1942-43. This five-fold rise tends to point out the fact that alcohol, among other excisable articles, was gaining increased favour with the masses. This deduction being apart, the old gazetteer compiled in 1910 records the fact of three distilleries existing at that time at Bilaspur, Bagia and Naina Devi without any limitation on the quantity of spirit they might distil though these could sell their product to licensed vendors only. This freedom, though hedged by figures of excise revenue, again tends to point out a high incidence of alcoholism. But in contrast to this position

*the Settlement Report of 1907* observes.

“गोदत अमूमन सब लोग खाते हैं शराब नहीं पीते।”

Usually all are non-vegetarian but don't drink. Diametrically opposite was perhaps the position during the reign of Raja Anand Chand when excise duty on opium and liquor, was one of the main sources of State income. Whatever scanty record is available reveals that the people were fond of liquor, and both country and foreign liquor were consumed. The women did not take alcohol.

Free distillation and drinking must have been prevalent from the earliest times without any or at least not much interference by the State till 1859 when beginning of distillation of liquor, locally was made for the first time.

The erstwhile State with a view to discouraging drinking declared the whole State as dry from 1942-43 onward. The habit however, did not die and people freely indulged in illicit distillation and drinking. This forced the Himachal Pradesh Government to re-introduce consumption of alcohol by auctioning of country and I.M.F.L. shops for 1971-1972.

## HOME LIFE

### Types of dwellings

The majority of houses, belonging to the peasantry, are scattered in pleasant and picturesque localities. A typical house made of sun-dried bricks, comprises two storeys. The inmates dwell in the lower storey, the upper being used, during the greater part of the year, as a lumber-room or store-room for grain. During the rainy season the upper storey is used as kitchen and, in many cases, as a sleeping-room when the whole family occupy it to escape the usually close and unhealthy air of the ground floor. The roof is generally made of thatch; thick, substantial and neatly trimmed, but of late years slates have been extensively used and C.G.I. sheets have also appeared on the scene. The outer walls are plastered with red or light coloured clay. The courtyard is kept clean and fresh, encircled by a hedge of trees and brambles for maintaining privacy. On the side of the house is the cow-shed called *gohed*, and, yet another structure, being the fold for the sheep and goats, styled as *ori*. Man of substance, possesses a buffalo or two; these are penned in separate tenements called *mehara*. The thatch of the cottage, as a common practice, is repaired or renewed once in three years, but in parts where grass is plentiful, a fresh covering is added annually. The ridge-pole is made of tun, sisu, oh, or fir. Every year, in the season of the *navratra* in September the cottage is replastered inside out, a labour which devolves upon all the women in all but of the highest castes. For marriages, too, the bridegroom's house is invariably adorned, painted it fresh with gay coloured clay. Main entrance is secured by a wooden door, and, during the absence of the household, is hasped and locked.

Due to shortage of timber its use is made sparingly. The houses built

in the district, in the distant past, are generally primitive in style lacking adequate windows and ventilators but those constructed in the recent past have been provided with sufficient ventilations. With the march of time more and more scientific outlook is pervading the building operations. Country-side houses still lack, overwhelmingly, the electricity and protected water-supply.

Generally, neither any outside labour for masons or carpenters are imported. All of them are local and well-versed in their art to satisfy the local demand. The above description applies mainly to the dwellings of common people and peasantry living mostly in the villages. The types of dwellings in the old township of Bilaspur were somewhat better because this place has had the good fortune of being the seat of the Administration. Here the houses, especially belonging to the ruling family, notables and persons of prosperity and means, were better constructed, well ventilated, commodious and comfortable sometimes even luxurious, according to the means of the owner. Due to the construction of Bhakra Dam the entire area bearing these houses has submerged under the Gobind Sagar and because of this a new township, on modern lines of architecture and sanitation, has come up on the declivity of the hill on the left side of the Satluj, a little above the original site of the Bilaspur town. Perched as it is, on the declivity of the hill it commands a fascinating view of the lake nestling below. Moreover, it enjoys the privilege of having all modern amenities such as electricity, water-supply and a well planned drainage system. The houses already constructed, under construction or to be constructed, are of latest design affording much comfort to occupants.

In respect of rural housing the problem that are worthy of attention and planned solution in the villages are paucity of suitable and sufficient accommodation, lack of separate sheds for cattle, wrong planning giving way to insanitary and un-hygienic conditions, clumsy construction, dearth of suitable building material, absence of suitable drainage system and injurious nearness to grain fields that leads to malaria, typhoid and other outbreaks.

Some of these problems are attended to and solved by various departments including the block development agency, especially when new houses are built with loan advanced by the Government. Many problems still need looking into.

### **Furnitures and decorations**

The houses in the villages are furnished generally in the simplest style. As Hindus mostly prefer metal utensils, every house has its set of utensils and vessels made of brass copper, or other metal and there are also the earthen jars (*ghara*) and pottery of various names and shapes. The latter is extensively used by the poorer section of the population. In the winter the women

plait mats of rice straw (*manjri*) to cover the floors of the rooms, to serve as seat for more than one person and to form as mattress on which to spread the bed if cot is not used. They also make a sort of quilt stuffed with pieces of old clothes and rags known as *khind* and is used either as a coverlet or as a mattress. Bedstead (charpoy) are invariably possessed by every family. A hubble-bubble (*hukka*), and a wicker basket suspended from the roof containing bread and other articles necessary to be secured from the depredations of cats, rats and vermins, also constitute the furniture of the household. Some prosperous peasants possess a few chairs and tables. Many houses of well-to-do and educated persons, particularly in the town, have a time piece or watch, a radio set and other articles of comfort and luxury. In the house of ordinary populace, bamboo basket, locally called *chhad* is kept by the bedside of a guest to put clothes in it. In every household, fans, made of either pea-cock feathers, straw or clothes or some other material, are indispensable. Instead of trunks, baskets of bamboos and wooden boxes are generally used for keeping clothes. The baskets made of bamboos are covered with leather. But in the towns, people mostly use trunks and suit cases for stowing their clothes. In most of the villages, where electricity has not yet reached, kerosene lights and lamps are used. Fuel used in each household by almost all, spoil by its soot, the beauty and decoration of the house.

Receptacle for foodgrains is called *pedu* or *pedi* according to its being small or large respectively. This round-conical shaped receptacle is made of bamboos with a lid and with a hole in the lower part to get grains when needed. It is plastered inside out with a mixture of clay and cow dung. Most of the families have a hand mill. Milk churn is almost an indispensable item in each household in the rural areas. A spinning wheel, known as *charkha* is an essential item in a family. Wool or cotton is spun in *charkha* mostly by females. Previously a spinning wheel was customarily given to a daughter at her marriage but now this tradition is on the decline.

In rural areas generally orthodox and religious minded people decorate house walls with paints, portraying in colours, images of Krishana, Rama, Lakshman and Sita; birds like pea-cock, parrot and sparrow etc. Females are fond of decoration of the walls. Photographs of leaders, actors and actresses are also found nailed in the walls. Cutcha walls of houses are mud plastered or white washed with clay known as *golu* or rarely with lime, generally grey or white in colour. The houses in the urban areas are mostly pukka and walls are decorated with photographs of the family members, and calendars of different designs. There the house roofs may be painted red or green and so also windows and doors, with different paints purchased from the market. In the rural areas roofs are rarely painted. For colouring wooden windows and doors paint prepared from ochre (*geru*) is used. Wood works are generally simple and rarely artistic.

The position in the growing township of Bilaspur would seem to be

mostly, if not entirely, different inasmuch as here the bulk of the population is comprised of educated people, either in service or in business, with more refined taste, more means at their command, and, these factors enable them to possess a variety of furniture and decorative material of the modern age as would be found anywhere in the cities.

### Dress

The dress used by a male child comprises a cap (*topu*) a *jhaggu*, a *suthanu* and *chhitru*. A female child uses a *chadru*, a *kurti*, a *suthanu* and a *chhitri*. But there is no fundamental difference in the dress of a female child, a young girl and an old lady except that of diminutive names applied to child's dress.

The ordinary clothing of a man consists of shirt (*kurta*), *dhoti*, trousers (*suthan*) and loin-cloth (*kapeen*) or (*langoti*). Members of scheduled caste, however, never use *dhoti*. A turban, invariably used in the past, has yielded place to a skull cap (*topi*) or more often the person prefers to go bare-headed. Among the educated classes the clothes are mostly cut on the western pattern. They certainly put on a trousers (*pajama*) to attend large gatherings such as marriages, fairs and festivals. They sometimes wear sweaters. Coat, generally of hand spun wool is used during winter season while going out of their houses. Males wear dull coloured shirts and white *pajamas*. The shoes used by men are *pahari jootas* (locally made shoes) prepared by shoe makers at places like Dhadla and Gherwin.

The female dress is picturesque. They wear a frock reaching to the knees *kurti*, *chadru*, trousers called *suthan* and *chhitri*, *jooti* and sleeper (locally made shoes). A *dopatta*, or mantle to form the head-dress is mostly coloured and embroidered. In recent times, however, the Punjabi *kurta* and *salwar* have extensively come into use with negligible *jalidar dopatta* thrown across the shoulders. Another ancient dress called *pishwaj* a cotton gown of light texture, has fallen into disuse. The female dress is generally prepared from mill made cloth. On festive occasions the women mostly use highly colourful clothes usually embroidered or printed. On marriages the women are usually seen clad in red, yellow and black, but females belonging to scheduled caste do not prefer red clothes.

The dress used by the aged persons is a turban of coarse cloth locally called *safa* a collar-less *kurta*, a loin-cloth (*partāni*) and shoes locally called *jora*. Mostly they do not put on trousers except when attending marriages, fairs and festivals. Old women's dress comprises *chadru*, *kurti*, trousers and *chhitri*. A widow puts on white clothes.

The impact of the modern fashion on the dress of the people is quite noticeable. Children as well as young men are seen inclined to deviate from the old fashion and to prefer a dress of modern cuts including shirts, loose

*pajamas* and boots. They prefer mostly white shirts and trousers of latest fashion and instead of *kapeen* use *partani* an apology for a *dhoti*. Similarly the young educated girls dress themselves in the new and latest fashion. One cannot omit to notice the impact of modern influence on the dress of people, especially the educated class and in many cases on the uneducated class too. One would however, very seldom come across a person apparelled in clothes tailored after the English style and completely dressed in so far as sometimes if trousers are on, a coat would be missing, if both are worn a necktie will be conspicuous by its absence, a hat would hardly be found to make the dress complete and for one omission or the other the wearer would look to be miserably, if not shabily, dressed.

People are receiving the benefit of training in tailoring centres run by the Government in the district and also of their own, elsewhere in the cities, and bringing about a sweeping change in the pattern of garments. Moreover, they keep sewing machines in their houses. Previously, all used to put on the hand stitched clothes but now this practice is dwindling.

In winter woollen coarse blanket known as *pattu* (shawl) and cotton *khesi* are used in the morning and evening to keep off the cold. The dresses of various castes do not reflect any significant difference except vague economic standards. Mostly mill made cotton cloth is used by villagers, purchased from places like Bilaspur and Ghamarwin or elsewhere and got tailored. The clothes are washed with the ashes of sesame straw, soap nuts by the wearers themselves. Generally they wash the clothes after a week.

### Ornaments

As a rule dwellers of urban and sub-urban areas do not deck their bodies with heavier and antique ornaments and prefer to wear lighter ones made after the modern fashion prevailing in the cities. But the position in the rural areas would seem to be somewhat different inasmuch as there the rural-folk, less susceptible to the waves of modernism still stick to the old fashioned ornaments which are usually heavier in weight and uglier in appearance.

Generally, one would not come across a male wearing some significant ornaments except a pair of small golden ear-rings, locally known as *murki*. A man of wealth may put on a finger-ring or two and that completes the list of ornaments used by males. On the other hand, there is great and natural hunger for ornaments among the fair sex who like to possess as many items as they can, to provide aid to the beauty. To wear certain items of ornaments is the sign of their being in married state as against the state of widowhood in which wearing of ornaments is customarily and completely a taboo. In case of death in a family ornaments are not worn during the period of mourning. Usually, they daily put on smaller items of ornaments, made for the nose,



ears, hand and wrists but they exhibit a wealth of ornaments on the gala days, marriages and on similar other occasions which draw them out of their daily drudgery to the public scene.

Generally each area seems to have its different manufactures, and special varieties in the styles of its jewellery and ornaments, which it is frequently difficult to procure except in their own particular locality. The ornaments worn by the women, vary immensely in design and shape, so that the eye has to be perpetually on the watch to grasp the new forms which sometimes are met with at short distances from each other.

According to the economic position each household possesses either gold or silver ornaments. *Chak*, a skull ornament made of gold or silver is used by almost every woman. It is either cup shaped or disk shaped. Another ornament of daily use is a pair of silver ear-rings, used almost by every woman, except widows. Old women put on invariably ear-rings (*balis*) in their ear lobes, gold ear-rings if possessed, reserved for special occasion, silver *gajroos* adorn the wrists. *Baloo* (nose ring), a circular shaped ornament of gold is suspended from the nose. Some more idea of the list of ornaments may be had from the succeeding list:-



| Spot of<br>adornment | Ornament  | Metal                                    | Remarks                                    |
|----------------------|---|--|--|
| Skull                |   |  |  |
| Ear                  | <i>Chak</i><br><i>Bragar</i>                                      | Gold or<br>silver.                       | Worn by women only.                        |
|                      | <i>Murki</i> or<br><i>Kante</i><br>(ear-ring)                     | „  | Worn by men & women.                       |
| Nose                 | <i>Long, Nath,</i><br><i>Tili</i> and<br><i>Baloo</i>             | „  | Worn by women only.                        |
| Neck                 | <i>Har</i><br>(Necklace)  | „  | „  |
| Wrist                | Bangles<br><i>Gajroo</i><br><i>Kangnu</i> and<br><i>Chhalbaly</i> | „<br>Silver,                             | „  |
| Finger               | Finger-ring   | Gold,<br>silver,<br>brass and<br>copper. | Worn by men and women.                     |
| Ankle                | <i>Paze</i> and<br><i>Jhanjer</i>                                 | Silver<br>Silver                         | Worn by women only.<br>Worn by women only. |

Besides, decoration of the body and affording aid to beauty and feminine attraction, ornaments serve a useful purpose, as these can be pledged and thus money can be procured on loan in days of distress and adversity. Generally a married women is at liberty to use her ornaments as and when there is an occasion for so doing but the use is restricted to embellishment of the body, and, she is tacitly precluded from the right of sale or gift or mortgage of the precious objects because such a right stands reserved exclusively to the husband or other elderly male of the household. Should a marriage end up in divorce, all the ornaments, according to the local tradition, given to her by her in-laws or husband, have to be returned to the former husband.

Of late the desire for heavy ornaments is perceptibly decreasing if not rapidly disappearing and the modern tendency among the younger generation is to have ornaments to the minimum and to have only lighter items. Even some old women who were fond of wearing more than one ear-ring in their ear lobes, are now seen with not more than one in each lobe. The ornaments, mostly used by the young women now, irrespective of their caste and community are necklace, *chak*, *tili*, *kante* and finger-rings made of gold or other metal according to their means and aptitude. Different styles of hair, use of powder, cream, lipstick and numerous similar items are sought for increasingly then the ornaments. Then again the village shops are full of cheap jewellery, plastic bangles, and glass bangles etc., which suit even the smallest purse and provide a perfect but cheap substitute for costly ornaments.

### Food

The chief staple foods are maize and rice. Maize is a very favourite grain and, from September till May, is in constant consumption. In the months of June, July and August, wheat, vegetables and pulses are frequently consumed. This seasonal change in diet is natural corresponding to depletion of one kind of corn and accumulation of others. In the rice growing areas the people usually reserve the clear unbroken rice for sale, retaining the chipped pieces for their own use off and on. Other cereals include, barley, gram, besides pulses. On festive occasions *potande*, *babaru*, *ankaro*, *bhalle* and *khichari*, form the special dishes. On *Baisakhi* festival *potande* constitute the dainty dish. Wheat flour is mixed with water to turn it into a thin paste of which a small part is spread on a hot and slightly greased griddle making almost a transparent layer over which a broken pitcher is put to cover and cook it. The *potande* are taken with milk mixed with *ghi* and *shakar* and *dal* of *mash*. In the *Diwali* festival *ankalos* constitute the common delicious dish. The rice flour and water are made into a thin mixture which is put into a small earthen pot called *lotku* from which it is poured into the holes carved on *choisi* a special stone griddle, meant exclusively for preparation of *ankalo*. *Ankalos* are eaten with milk or *ghi* and *gur* or *shakar* and also with *mash-ki-dal*. *Khichari* (rice boiled with pulse) is prepared on the festival of *Lohri* falling a day ahead of the *Sankrant* of *Magh*. Its favourite companion is *ghi*. The vegetables consumed, on mass scale, are mustard leaves, potato and *kachalu* in the winter, but vegetables are more extensively consumed in rainy season when these grow in abundance. These are pumpkins, gourds, brinjals, lady's fingers, radish, ginger and onion.

Gold washers (*dawlas*) are fond of and usually consume fish throughout the year while brahmans and others take it occasionally. Though non-vegetarians are in majority yet due to shortage of meat-supply it is taken rather rarely i.e. twice or thrice a month. On festive occasions a

goat is often killed to provide flesh. Consumption of meat is avoided by almost all sections on *punya* (full moon day) and on fast days. Cows and buffaloes are kept almost by each household in the rural areas according to the economic position of the owner and ghi is prepared and consumed. Milk enters rarely in the diet. As the yield of ghi and milk is not much its sale is negligible. A few people in the rural areas spare ghi for sale and some near the urban areas sell milk.

Tea is taken fairly extensively but sugar, being a costlier commodity, is substituted by *gur* and *shakar*. *Sharbat* and *chhach* (butter-milk) are also taken in the mornings during summer.

Among the fruits mango is consumed during the season in July and August. *Papaya*, guava, peaches, orange and bananas are grown and eaten but in smaller quantity.

Various food taboos exist in the district. A woman in menses is not allowed to touch and much less to cook food until after four days when she bathes and changes her clothes. She cannot enter the kitchen nor can she touch earthen vessels during the period.

The agricultural classes have usually three meals a day. Before going to their morning work the men partake of some bread reserved from the evening repast. This is called *datialu*. At noon is the first full meal consisting of maize *roti* and some *dal* or butter-milk. In the evening is the supper in which rice sometimes appears.

### Amusements and festivities

During the agricultural off season characterised by comparatively less work on the fields and farms people have various amusements and it is not uncommon for the aged persons to gossip, to tell tales and exchange riddles while sitting round the hearth. A specimen folk tale is given below :—

“Once upon a time there lived a Jat in a village. He had two sons, a shrewd and a simpler. The Jat died. After performing the last rites of their father the sons fell out and decided on partition. The landed property was partitioned equally and so also the movable property. A blanket and a buffalo being indivisible into two equal shares remained as a source of discord. After a good deal of hot exchanges an agreement was reached. The shrewd son proposed to keep the hind of the buffalo and the fore was to go to the simple son. As for blanket the simple son agreed to use it during the day and the shrewd one at night. The simple son thus could not see through the trick of his shrewd brother and fell into the trap. He had to feed the buffalo throughout the day. The shrewd son would milk it in the morning and evening. Similarly, the simple son feeling no necessity of

the blanket in the day stowed it but at night it was taken by the shrewd brother and the simple one had to pass the night shivering.

The simple son very much felt the disadvantages he had been put to but bound by the agreement could not help. Once he met a clever man and related his tale of woe and asked for solution. The man listened intently and tendered advice that when the shrewd brother came to milk the buffalo the simple one should start beating its head with a club. If the other protested he should say that he was at liberty to use his part of the buffalo in any way he likes. As for the blanket he suggested that after keeping it carefully throughout the day he should soak it into the water by the dusk. The simple son took his cue and acted accordingly. When he started beating the buffalo it began to kick and jump. He could not milk. He protested but to no effect. Similarly the simple son soaked the blanket at the dusk and handed it over to his shrewd brother. It was of no use. In this way the shrewd brother's trick was checkmated and set at naught. Repetition of these proceedings brought the shrewd brother to his knees and he entered into a compromise with his simple brother. It was thereafter agreed that each brother would use the buffalo and the blanket on alternative days. Thereafter they lived amicably."

### Festivals

Festivities on household scale include *Baisakhi* or *Bishu* or *Basoa*, *Hariyali*, *Janam Ashtmi*, *Sair*, *Dussehra*, *Diwali*, *Lohri*, *Shivratri* and *Holi*. Special foods prescribed for festivals, *halva* and local sweet dish called *ankalos* are cooked and partaken by the family members. A common feature of all the festivals is that villagers usually observe fasts. It is believed that observance of fast on such days results in prosperous future life. Consumption of foodgrains, pulses and salty dishes is avoided.

The *Baisakhi* festival falls on the first of *Baisakh*. *Potande*, are prepared and eaten with relish. In the month of *Sawan* a festival of *Hariyali* is celebrated. As the name denotes this is a festival of greenness and verdurous nature all around which is hailed by people. *Janam Ashtmi*, the anniversary of Lord Krishna's birthday is celebrated in the month of *Sawan* or *Bhadon*. Community singing of religious songs take place in the houses and temples until midnight, the hour of Lord Krishna's birth. People keep fasts. Feasts are given. The chief festival is the annual fair observed on the first day of *Asuj*. In the morning the barber goes about with a basket containing a *galgal* (citrus fruit) and announces the arrival of that auspicious day. Men, women and children bow to the fruit which represents the fruit of the harvest about to be reaped. All of the family members meet and greet, the women appear in their best robes and the best food is cooked and partaken. This day marks the departure of the rainy season. The *Dussehra* is celebrated annually in *Asuj* in the *Sadr tahsil*. Several people from many villages

gather at a central place and stage *Ram lila*. On the tenth day, the effigies of Ravana are burnt and the people, the young and old rejoice. *Diwali* or the festival of lights, is observed mainly by Hindus and Sikhs. It takes place in autumn, in the month of October/November. The traditional origin of the *Diwali* is to commemorate the victory of Rama over Ravana. On Rama's return to Ayodhya, he was greeted and welcomed by illumination. The houses are cleaned, goddess Lakshmi is worshipped and relatives are invited to feast. The special dish of *Diwali* is the *ankalos*. Another local festival is *Lohri* celebrated on the last day of *Poh* when a family worships a raging fire of logs in the evening. The next day is famous for partaking *khichari* a meal made with the mixture of rice and *dal*. In the *Shivratri* ceremony, the people content themselves with offering a lota of milk in a Siva temple. All the traditional festivals that were celebrated within the precincts of the houses only are still being observed without any addition. The *Holi* festival is only celebrated in Bilaspur town in the month of *Phagun* in the memory of Prahlad. The people irrespective of age take part in the rejoicings and throw coloured water and powder on each other. The effigies of Holika are burnt.

### COMMUNAL LIFE

This district is almost hilly, means of communication and conveyance are meagre, villages are small and scattered, population is sparse, towns are very few and cities none. Therefore, communal life is naturally not much particularly in the rural areas. Contacts of people are limited and localised. Nevertheless signs of communal life are reflected by certain fairs and some places of worship assume, at times, the status of a pilgrim centre.

#### Pilgrim centres

There are several shrines where devotees come from many parts of India on pilgrimage at stated times of the year. Mention has already been made of the important temples and, some places, where these temples are situated, have developed into important pilgrim centres such as Markand and Naina Devi.

**Markand :** Markand, with two holy tanks, a temple to sage Markanday and a *thakurdwara* situates in the Sadr tahsil of the district. According to the popular belief it is sacred, being the birth place of the renowned sage Markanday, a contemporary of sage Vyas. The father of Markanday is believed to have performed penance here to Brahma who fulfilled his desire for a son. A spring also gushed forth. Thus the place assumed importance and devotees from far and near come here for a holy dip in the spring season in the hope of earning divine grace, to be blessed with sons and daughters, and to get immunity from diseases and difficulties. It is also commonly believed that a bath in the spring cures sterility, and

infant diseases. With the passage of time, the place fell into disuse. During the reign of Raja Jagat Chand, saint Bhajan Dass came here and constructed a temple with the help of the public and the raja. A *thakurdwara* was constructed by the mother of Raja Anand Chand, who had so vowed should she be blessed with a son. Her prayers were granted, she was rewarded with a son and she redeemed her promise.

In the vicinity of the temple commodious inns have been constructed by Rani Nagar Devi in which travellers stay during pilgrimages and fairs to have holy dips into the two tanks, one for men and the other for women, adjacent to the Markanday temple. Those are fed with the water of the spring. Synchronising with *Baisakhi* a fair is held every year and people come from every part of the district as also from Arki, Mandi, Hamirpur and Kangra. Markanday is linked with Bilaspur by Brahmpukhar-Jukhala-Markand-Ali *khad* crossing road but the travellers have to walk on foot about three kilometres from Jukhala onward.

**Naina Devi :** Naina Devi temple, situated at the top of a triangular hill, commanding an unparalleled view of the hill, Anandpur Sahib Gurdwara on one side and Gobind Sagar on the other, falls in Sadr tahsil. About this place many legends are current. According to mythology Raja Daksh, out of pride did not invite his son-in-law, Lord Siva to a yajna. His daughter was much offended and plunged herself into the sacrificial fire. Siva, being informed rushed to the spot only to find her half-burnt. In desperation Siva carried her half-burnt body on his shoulder from summit to summit of the Himalayas. Her charred mortal remains dropped one by one from place to place and in this process her (*Nain*) eyes fell on this summit where the gods constructed a temple instantaneously. The same, later on gained eminence as Naina Devi temple. Since then the eyes of the goddess began to be worshipped and it is believed that her devotees gain eye-sight by her worship. Another version is that this temple was built by the Pandavas. While according to another legend, goddess Naina was discovered by a Gujjar named Naina.

Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth Sikh Guru is also stated to have spent sometime in the temple and thence onwards the place has become equally sacred to Sikhs who attend the fair in hundreds from all over the Punjab.

People believe that the goddess has great supernatural powers of averting calamities and granting boons. Considering this background it is no wonder that the place has become a renowned pilgrim centre.

The week-long *Shrawan Ashtmi* fair is held here every year, attendance of visitors going up to over one lakh persons. Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims from far flung areas of Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh visit the temple to pay their homage to the goddess. Some of the devotees cross the

tall end of the journey to the temple by prostrating themselves on the roadside and almost crawling which is known as *sashtang daridvata*. Thousands of devotees and pilgrims are seen chanting devotional hymns, singing *bhajans*, *kirtan* and offering prayers during the mela.

### Common habits

The majority of the population is agriculturists. During the agricultural season they are tired from the day's hard labour and, therefore, go to bed early and to attend the work before the day becomes hot, rise early. The daily life of a typical agriculturist starts with a hubble-bubble. The smoker spends a few minutes puffing on it. During the proceedings in the day they smoke several times after intervals. The hookah, it is thought, affords short respite from hard work and soothes the nerves. Generally the people get up at about 5 A.M. in the summer and about 6.30 A.M. in the winter. Immediately the women set about milking animals, making butter and preparing food. Some members of the family fetch water from the *khad* or a spring. Children generally get up late. Soon every one gets ready for the work. Before leaving for work the men partake of some stale bread, a meal known as *datialu*, left over from evening repast. If it is sowing and harvesting season, they work all day in the fields, and their food is brought to them there unless they return home to take their mid-day meal. In winter they bask in the sun and indulge in gossip. The women, if free from hearth, mostly bring fire-wood and fodder from the forest or fields otherwise preparation of food is their exclusive and foremost work except on occasions of illness and the like. During the agricultural off seasons the family members amuse themselves by telling or listening of tales and exchanging riddles and singing songs till late in the night. Some persons spin cotton or wool and twist thread. They go to bed about 9.00 P.M. during the summer and a little later during the winter. The system of seclusion, of females, which shuts them from the eyes of all males but the husband, children and parents, is not absolutely absent. Women are still given to *purdah* especially from the strangers and try to hide her face as far as possible, by veiling with a *dopatta* or a *chadru*.

### Communal dances

Bilaspur like other hilly regions has been, down the ages, more or less, cut off from the centres of civilisation and its people have led a secluded life. In certain respects this seclusion has been a blessing in disguise inasmuch as the people have been able to preserve certain sociological features that belong to a bygone age. Its folk-lore and indigenous dances, among other things, lend an old-world charm to the daily life of the people. They have their own traditions and customs, they have their own glorious past and they have developed their own culture including the art of music and dance with a great local name and fame. The lyrics and ballads composed by the village folks



in *Kahluri* dialect are not only on the lips of everyone within the district but also are sung in other parts of the Himachal Pradesh. The historical exploits of the local heroes are also chanted in different melodies by the local bards and minstrels as also by other people. Most, if not all, of the local lyrics and ballads are sung in the hills and dales, individually or collectively, not only day in and day out but also on certain special occasions including marriages, religious ceremonies, social gatherings and local fairs and festivals when these performances get added elegance by the accompaniment of the dances. By virtue of its situation on the verge of the plains and the hilly regions, the culture of the people has been equally influenced by the way of life in the plains as also in the hills. So is the case with its folk tunes. The dances in the rural areas are generally arranged and performed for the sheer pleasure and amusement. In the urban areas the outdoor dances are generally performed by certain special classes such as *Tooris* who are, more or less, professional musicians and dancers. Others draw their amusement by witnessing the performance. At times, even in the rural areas the village community at large without actively participating in dancing and singing witness the performances given either by the local professionals or by professional parties coming from outside the district. The list of local dances is by no means big. The principal ones are *Gidda*, *Nati*, *Swang*, *Bhajan* and *Ras*.

*Gidda*—This popular folk dance appears to be the product of the Punjab where from it has penetrated into the district of Bilaspur, indeed much deeper into the Himalayas. As for the participating performers it is a monopoly of the females though males are not forbidden to witness it. The performers generally put on *salwar* and *kurta* with a negligible head-scarf. Anklets are added to produce pleasant tinkling sound during the dance. *Gidda* is a joyful dance performed to the accompaniment of special songs, the time being marked by a *dholki*. The dancers, at the time of dancing, arrange themselves in a circle around the *dholki*, player who is necessarily a female. While making supple movements of limbs and taking steps the dancer, as also onlookers, make a clapping sound which adds substantially, to the charm of the performance. The dance starts with a slow and leisurely tempo which, as the time passes is accelerated and towards the conclusion becomes very fast. Specimen songs of *gidda* dance sung in Deoli village of Sadr tahsil are given below :-

## 1

रल मिल पाणिये जो जाना ओ ननदिये । रल मिल...

गुडला रोट पकाणा ओ ननदिये । रल मिल ...

खवाजी पोर मनाणी ओ ननदिये । रल मिल ...

## 2

मियामिन जो बूडिये जग ओ रचाया

थोड़ा थोड़ा बो बरताया को बीत भैया भगता नूँ । थोड़ा . . .  
 बुड़िये माइये जग जे रचाया । थोड़ा थोड़ा . . . ;

## 3

राजे रे बागे लख लख बूटिया । इक बूटी जहर मिलो  
 नैणा नू लड़ा आई । इक बूटी जहर मिलो  
 राजे रे बागे लख लख बूटिया । इक बूटी जहर मिलो  
 नैणा नू वछोड़ आई । इक . . . .

## 4

पारलिया कुमालिया छुआरे रे ला बूटा  
 हरि सिंगा देवरुआ ओ लो बो मेरेया । हरि सिंगा . . . .  
 पारलिया कुमालिया कैथे रे ला बूटा  
 कदू काटण कदू खाना बो देवरुआ । हरि सिंगा . . . .  
 पारलिया कुमालिया गरीया रे ला बूटा  
 कदो काटणो कदो खानो बो देवरुआ । हरि सिंगा . . . .  
 बेड़ा टले तो उरे परे होइये  
 अम्बर गिरे केई जाणा ओ मेरेया । हरि सिंगा . . . .  
 पुल पर खड़िया रे पुलसा री जोड़ों  
 किजा करी लंगना ओ पार देवरुआ । हरि सिंगा . . . . ;

## 5

गडी अब जै चढ के भुख जै लगदो  
 ओ गड़िया पैंडे मखना दे । ओ . . . .  
 गड़िया में चढ के प्यास जो लगदी  
 ओ गड़िया नोर जमना दा । ओ . . . .  
 गड़िया जे चढ के पाला जो लगदा  
 ओ गड़िया बादर परामा दी । ओ . . . .

गड़िया चढ के निद जे लगदी

कि गड़िया सेजा फूला दी । ओ गड़िया. . .

पंज सी अस्सिया बेसर जो लयाया

बेसर छड़ो आया हटो वे । बाबू तेरी बेसरा ने जड पटो वे ।

कि बाबू . . . .

पंज सी अस्सिया गजरे जो लयाया ।

गजरे छड़ो आया छड़ो वे । बाबू नो तेरी गजरे ने जड पटी वे ।

कि बाबू . . . .

पंज सी अस्सिया चूड़े जो लयाया ।

चूड़े छड़ो आया हटो । ओ बाबू तेरे चूड़ेया ने जड पटो ।

कि बाबू . . . .

बंगा जे मुंडा बेसर लयाया

ओ बेसर होई गई तंग मुंडया ।

गली आबणे ते होई गया बन्द मुंडया । गली . . . .

बंगा जे मुंडा बूट लयाया

ओ बूट होई गये तंग मुंडया ।

गली ओण ते होई गया बन्द मुंडया । गली . . . .

बंगा जे मुंडा बंगा लयाया

ओ बंगा जे होई गया तंग मुंडया ।

गली ओण ते होई गया बन्द मुंडया । गली . . . .

*Nati*—*Nati* is a term interchangeable with a folk-song, a folk-dance and a beating drum for its accompaniment. This dance does not admit of any limitations about sex, age and caste. *Nati* is necessarily an open air dance. It may be solo or chorus. There is no specific period or occasion for its performance but generally it is performed, in the rural areas, after harvests, when the people are free from the field work and are in a jubilant mood. Tooris, weavers and cobblers are specialists and give performance for the amusement of others and thereby earn something. The musical instruments used in *nati* dance are harmoniums, kettle drums, hour-glass drums, hautboys etc. Usually the dance is accompanied by a song and the time is marked by the beat of a drum. Bilaspur district may be regarded as the boundary line for a

Pahari *nati* dance for as one descends in the plains the lesser is its influence and popularity among the people. As a general rule folk-songs of the district are of unusually lengthy and leisurely character and hence not suited for a dance in a *nati* which generally requires rapid rhythm.

*Swang*—It is a misconception, though much current, that *swang* is a dance. In fact it is another name for *karyala*, *banthra*, *deothan*, *mal*, and *marghriaoli*, all terms applicable to a folk-drama performed at different dates of the year. Necessarily this folk-drama is inclusive of folk-songs, folk-dances, and dialogues. If anything it can be described as tableau. Even the style of performances vary from place to place depending on the troupe of local actors who portray the character of those prominent, socially, economically, politically, and otherwise. The actors caricature and lampoon these personalities and lash them through most pungent satire. Some of the actors are particularly adept in the art of provoking laughter so that they will send their audience into peals of laughter and thereby earn not only the admiration but also sufficient amount in cash. In this district *swang* is popular but to a comparatively lesser degree. A *swang* may be arranged at the time of a marriage ceremony among the Scheduled Castes.

In Bilaspur proper, being the seat of the ruler, theatre (an improvement on rural *swang*) used to be performed off and on. The theatre in the district, too has an interesting history. Towards the middle of the reign of Raja Bijai Chand it is said to have flourished on a grand scale, but towards the close of that reign it fell into disrepute and was closed. Since the year 1939 attention was directed to its revival. It had its new beginning in the High School, where students started staging small dramas and plays.

Every school for boys and girls followed the example of the High School and put up shows of their own on howsoever modest a scale. Some of the shows especially towards the close of the year 1942 were said to be of exceptional merit. To make it a real success a musical orchestra was requisitioned from Lahore. The settings were borrowed from the then State stores.

These theatrical and dramatic performances organised by the schools and, therefore, free from any evil effects, lent joy to the life of the people and the Recreation Hall, big and commodious as it was, is said to have been found many a time, insufficient to accommodate the eager visitors and performances had to be repeated day after day.

It was not only at the headquarters in the Recreation Hall that these performances were staged. To benefit the rural audience especially to bring modern ideas of life home to them, the stage was arranged outside too. At Ghamarwin in the winter of 1941 about a thousand persons are said to have attended. The show was, it is believed, a great success.

**Devotional dance**—In the urban and semi-urban areas people assemble at a religious place or on occasions of religious ceremonies or feasts or fasts. It is not uncommon of assemblage on these occasions to sing collectively, commonly called *kirtan*. These are purely and exclusively songs of devotion either to a local deity or to a principal god of the Hindu pantheon. The *kirtan* usually starts with a slow rhythm. It is sung to the accompaniment of harmonium if available, *khartal*, *dhholki*, and, to heighten the effect of these instruments, time is also marked by clapping. The song is not necessarily a long composition and, a line or two out of any prominent devotional song may be repeatedly said. With the gaining of momentum this chorus song produces a peculiar effect on the participants, more particularly, on ardent devotees and in the frenzy of devotion some of these may start to dance. This dance can be a solo or by a group. It has no set steps and one dances, literally, to the rhythm of musical instruments only. When the tempo is accelerated to a limit beyond which it is impossible to endure it the dance breaks down abruptly.

**Ras dance**—The *ras* dance is diametrically opposite to the folk-dance mentioned above. The *ras* actors are professional and trained. These professional artists, from Mathura and Brindaban of Uttar Pradesh State, come into this district and stage their plays at night, attended by a large local gathering. The dance is based on the love episodes between Radha and Krishna or any other story from the Puranas. Dress of Krishna comprises saffron-coloured *dhoti* and many bright imitation jewels. The *gopis* wear tight-fitting jackets and stiff umbrella-shaped black or red skirts over which short white upper skirts fall in frills from the waists. The head is covered with artificial *har* decorated with diadems. The whole costume is lavishly embroidered and dancers remind of the days of yore.

The party consists of about ten to fifteen male persons of all ages. *Ras-lila* begins with a *kirtan* and then the leader announces the subject matter and introduces the dancers to the audience. It starts with a dance expressing invocation to Krishna. *Ras* dance can be divided into six stages, namely, appearance of Krishna; appearance of Radha; dual dance between them; dance showing quarrel between them; *milan* dance or the dance showing reconciliation. Here Krishna and Radha dance with the *gopis* and lastly the prayer dance where Radha and *gopis* offer Him devotion. After this preliminary performance of the dances, the dramas depicting the life of legendary heroes like Harish Chandra, Prahlad, etc. are staged. Generally harmonium and *tabla* form the orchestra. Film songs may be sung as interludes to attract and entertain the audience. The performers being professional-artists earn money for their livelihood.

**Folk songs** — Dances, as would have been observed from the foregoing account, are performed usually to the accompaniment of folk songs, of which two are given below to serve as specimen

Tulsi, Lachhman and Mohan were three brothers. One of the elder brothers, a State employee, committed a murder. To save himself he prevailed upon his younger brother, Mohan, to confess the crime and promised that with his influence, he would get him acquitted. Mohan agreed. The murderer, however did not keep the promise and his younger brother had to face gallows at Bilaspur. Due to the sacrifice of Mohan people composed a song in his commemoration. This song is very popular and pathetic and is sung with great feelings by the rural people. Permeated with great pathos, often the listeners cannot help weeping while the song is sung. The happening is comparatively of recent times and many people vividly remember the ghastly sight of the public execution and extreme sacrifice of Mohan, the innocent, for his cunning, coward and deceitful elder brother. A few couplets of the song in *Bilaspuri* dialect, are given below :—

चड़या तख्ते ओ मोहना चड़या तख्ते,  
बिलासपुर सान्धुवे चड़या तख्ते ।

आया मरने ओ मोहना आया मरने,  
भाईया री कीतिया आया मरने ।

हाथा कंगना ओ मोहना हाथा कंगना,  
बेड़ी खड़के तेरे बिना आंगना ।

किलीया जूरी री ओ मोहना किलीया जूरी री,  
तेरे बांडो री बनसारी किलीया जूरी री ।

आया मरने ओ मोहना आया मरने,  
बगानिया कीतिया आया मरने ।

रोंदी लालो मियानी ओ मोहना रोंदी लालो मियानी,  
तेरे बिना आंगना रोंदी लालो मियानी ।

A free rendering of the song in English is given below :

“Mohan faced gallows in Sandhu ground,  
For his cruel brother, without a sound,  
Fettered unjustly and hand-cuffed,  
By elder brother so cunningly bluffed.

His studded and dear flute,  
Now hangs for long and mute.

For deceitful brother he bravely died,  
But exposed not who had lied.

Lalo, the youthful wife cries in vain,  
Never to see her darling lord again."

**Gambri**—This song is based on the true love story of Gambri, a village belle, who fell in love with Pistu, a wrestler of higher caste. She used to follow him wherever he went for wrestling bouts and at last he responded to her love and both eloped. They were, however, arrested and imprisoned, but did not leave each other. Gambri, left her first husband and finally became the wife of Pistu and lived happily with him. This song is popular, especially with young people being based on a local romance. A few lines are given below :—

- I. खाणा पिणा नन्द लेणी नी गम्बरीये  
खाटा नी खाणा लो मिट्ठा नी खाणा  
खाणे वागा दे केले नी गम्बरीये ।
- II. बन्दला परनालियां खड़ी कवालिया  
गमियां पाऊंदियां पंखा जुलावे पिस्तू नी गम्बरिये
- III. खसम मरे कोई होर घर करिये  
देवर मरे किया रैणा नी गम्बरिये
- IV. कपड़े फटे मैं दर्जी ते सियानां  
दिल वो फटे किया जीणा नी गम्बरिये ।

A free rendering of the song into English is as below :—

"Eat drink and be merry

O beautiful Gambri

You need hardly relish

Things sour and sweet

When soft and sweet bananas

You have enough to eat

Eat drink and be merry

O fair Gambri

Though path to 'Bandla'  
 Is difficult and steep  
 Why worry sweet heart  
 Pistu lulls you to sleep  
 Eat drink and be merry  
 O sweet Gambri  
 Let the wretched husband die  
 Another can be had  
 Torn clothes can be mended  
 But not broken heart  
 Eat drink and be merry  
 O flirt Gambri."

### **Festivities**

Living against the backdrop of the Himalayas, the people are hardy and much given to dancing. They also have numerous fairs and festivals held from time to time all the year around, when they can sing and dance and forget the cares of daily drudgery. On these occasions, they allow nothing to curb their exuberance and thus, the men and women, young and old, participate in these fairs, attired mostly in whatever fine clothes they have. Festivals have already been mentioned under the sub-head home life, here, only fairs have a religious significance, being celebrated to commemorate some legendary event. *Shrawan Ashtmi* fair at Naina Devi and markand fair at Makri are of such character. At religious fairs the images of the *deotas* are carried about in palanquins, but there is no dancing by the worshippers, and also little or no drinking. Others like the Nalwari fair or market at Bilaspur, are held mainly for the purpose of trade. The whole district is further cut up in lower valleys and uplands, rugged mountains and fertile lands the daily marketing in such country was, in the past, not only difficult but also impossible. Hence need was felt for periodical trade at a certain convenient place where people from far and near could come and participate in the fair. This need gave birth to some of the periodical fairs. Men and women from every corner of the district, with all their commodities and merchandise, come to attend these fairs and return to their respective places after or before the fair actually ends. Some fairs are held to commemorate some historic episode or in honour of a hero or a deity which are attended by large gathering of people with great enthusiasm. These fairs serve dual



purpose. Besides, transactions and merry making at such occasions the farmers get a chance to see their distant friends and relatives and enjoy life collectively by forgetting their domestic worries.

After the merger of States the Departments of Public Health, Education, Public Relations and Tourism utilised these occasions for educating people along with entertainment ; songs, dramatic performances, and public lectures on useful topics, cinema shows etc. are the usual forms of recreation. Some of the fairs may be described.

**Naina Devi Fair :—**This religious fair is held at Naina Devi on *Shrawan Ashtmi* lasting about a week which is attended by large crowd of pilgrims from far and near. Small fairs are also held here during the *Navratras*. Detailed account of the fair has already been given earlier in this volume.

**Markand Fair :—**A religious fair is held every year on a night during April and continues for three days. The fair is also known as *Baisakhi* fair when people from Bilaspur, Arki, Hamirpur, Kangra and Mandi assemble. The fair is organised by the *gram panchayat* with the assistance of police. The Markand village (Makri) being the place of pilgrimage, where pilgrims from far and near including inhabitants of surrounding villages attend the fair. Many temporary booths are erected. The maidens and belles purchase their requirements such as toilets, hosiery, sweets etc.

**Guga Fair :—**A fair lasting for eight days is held during the day time at Gherwin in commemoration of the exploits of Guga, a Hindu Rajput prince who in his youth subdued his enemies most heroically. In the month of *Bhadon* bands (*mandlis*) of singers go about singing episodes from his adventurous life, wandering from one of the districts to another and converge at Gherwin proper where Guga's temple is situated. The villagers worship at the shrine of Guga and make offerings in cash and kind in the temples consecrated to him throughout the district. It is a matter of common belief that propitiation of Guga wards off danger from snakes, which swarm the hills during the rains. This fair is held on a piece of land measuring about two bighas at village Gherwin thirteen kilometres from Bilaspur. About five or six thousand people of all classes and castes assemble in the fair. People from distant places like Ghamarwin, Aur, Marhol, Baroa, Badol, Dahmli and Bilaspur town come to the fair and females are generally in majority. They amuse themselves by singing and dancing. Now Public Relations Department arranges documentary film shows, which is a novel feature of the *mela*. The local shopkeepers display, for sale, sweetmeats, seasonal fruits and knick-knacks. The number of shops exceeds one hundred besides a number of hawkers. The local potters are busy in selling out their earthen wares. Food is provided by petty hotels popularly known as *dhabas*.

**Chakrana Fair :—**This fair takes place on the fourth of *Asuj* each year at village Chakrana situated within the *panchayat* circle of Bhapral on a piece of land measuring about fifteen acres where lies a temple to a saint constructed, about twenty years back, to perpetuate his memory. The site is a village common land, left unoccupied and uncultivated in the name of the temple. About eight to ten thousand people of all castes and creeds assemble from villages lying within the radius of about sixteen kilometres, travelling the distance generally on foot. The congregation generally consists of ruralists and about half the spectators are females. The local *panchayat* imposes a tax on the stall keepers who establish their booth on the site of the *mela* and the collections are utilised for the management of the fair. Small village shopkeepers usually put up their shops individually and the same lot of the shopkeepers generally speaking, return year after year to display and dispose of their merchandise and wares. These temporary shops comprise those of cobblers, potters and frequently of those selling religious pictures. There is no arrangement for meals. About ten to twelve wooden swings are set up.

**Bharnot Fair :—**This is held at Bharnot lying within the Ghamarwin tahsil on a piece of land measuring about 0.4 ha in area. When this *mela* came to to be celebrated for the first time and on what account it was held or is still being held, is not known. According to the popular belief, still current, this place, in the ancient times, was inhabited by a class of people locally called as Ruhnd. They had their abodes on this hill and were mainly given to dacoity. They had a chief of their own, who used to rule over the surrounding areas. Although, they were a fierce tribe, yet they worshipped *devis* and *devtas*. A stone image is still extant on the site and is called simply a *devta*. Tradition holds that when, in the past, rains failed altogether or were inadequate or untimely the women of the surrounding villages would repair to the place to propitiate the *devta* and before they reached their homes again the rain would fall. For how long this peculiar power of propitiation was wielded and to what extent the capricious monsoons yielded to this method cannot definitely be described. This much, is however, handed down by the tradition that only women enjoyed the privilege of a visit to this place and of propitiation of the *devta*.

The times have now changed and the rigid rules of the *devta* have also undergone a substantial relaxation inasmuch as now the fair is arranged, for sometime past, by the local *panchayat*. The main highlights of the fair are sale of sweets and fruits alongwith sundry articles of luxury, earthen wares, prepared by local potters, and leather shoes manufactured by the indigenous cobblers. About eighty to ninety shops, rather stalls, spring up besides a good number of hawkers. There is no arrangement for meals, although, spectators can enjoy a swing in the merry-go-rounds.

**Hari Devi Fair :** A *mela* of Hari Devi takes place in the village of

Lahrisarail situated within the *panchayat* circle of Bhapral. Previously the fair was held on the eighth of light half of the moon during the month of *Jeth* but now it takes place on the eighth of *Jeth* each year.

There is, at this place, a temple dedicated to *devi* (which, eighty years ago, was got constructed by a rani of Bilaspur). The fair is held in the name of this deity. About fifty years ago this *mela* came to be celebrated for the first time. It is held during the day only. The management of the *mela* rests on the shoulders of the local *panchayat* which to defray sundry expenses, levies a tax on the shopkeepers and the stall owners. It is estimated that about eight to ten thousand people, of all castes and classes, assemble in the fair from the villages lying within a radius of about thirteen kilometres from the place of the fair. About fifty per cent of the assemblage consist of the women. About fifty to sixty shops are put up on the site of the *mela* by the local shopkeepers who display for sale sweetmeats, seasonal fruits and knick-knacks. Besides fixed shops about ten to fifteen sellers of cheap eatables are seen roaming about in the gathering and plying their trade. Religious pictures form one of the main items for sale and eagerly looked for. Local potters and cobblers also find the *mela* a very promising market for the sale of pottery and foot-wears. One of the most conspicuous items of entertainment are the wooden swings, seen busy throughout the day.

**Baisakhi bath at Bachhretu :** On the day of *Baisakhi* a *mela* takes place at village Gangnon, pargana Bachhretu in tahsil Ghamarwin at a distance of about eighteen kilometres from Bilaspur. The *mela* starts on the eve of *Baisakhi*, continues throughout the night and comes to a close by the evening of the next day. Local people from all corners of the district congregate at this place on the occasion of the *mela*. A number of petty shopkeepers also put up small stalls or booths of various kinds of knick-knacks and sweetmeats and do a brisk business. The site of the *mela* is a piece of land belonging to a temple of Siva. Around the temple are a number of statues of various deities. Most conspicuous among them is the stone statue of a bull as big as an ordinary living bull. In the local dialect the bull is called *bachhu* after which the place is known as Bachhretu. The site of the *mela* is provided with a pukka tank containing water said to be so cold as to send in shivering a person taking bath in it even on a warm summer day. This *mela* is being celebrated since time immemorial. Apart from ordinary amusements and enjoyments derived usually from such a *mela* people consider it an act of merit to have a holy dip in the tank of cold water. This place has not so far been linked by a road and only village paths exist.

**Baisakhi Fair at Hatwar, Tahsil Ghamarwin :** A tank about 183 × 183m exists here. Two pipal (*ficus religiosa*) trees and a banyan tree, enhancing the beauty of the place, also exist. The tank remains filled with clear water

throughout the year. A Siva temple stands on one side of the tank, and in its precincts, some sadhus stay almost throughout the year. People believe that various diseases are cured by taking bath in the tank. A fair takes place here every year on *Baisakhi*, attended by a large number of people. As a rule a big assemblage performs puja, takes bath in the holy tank, on every full moon (*puranmashi*) and the last day of the dark half of a month (*amavasya*), when offerings are also made.

**Bada Dev Fair :** About five thousand years ago, so the tradition holds, Pandawas lived in Hastinapur. Once they were in exile, and wandered in parts of Himachal Pradesh. There are places where these Pandawas are said and believed to have taken shelter or rest. One of such places is Bari-ki-Dhar (Bari hill). Villages of Sanog, Buila and Deothal, all situated in the Arki tahsil, were also, it is said, visited by them and there are temples still extant. It is believed that on the Bari hill is the statue of Yudhishtra, in village Sanog that of Arjuna, in village Buila that of Nakula and in village Deothal that of Sahdev. Bhim Sen, out of some anger, went away after, it is said slapping the deity in a fit of rage deforming her face. Her statue exists in the temple at the crest too. Puja is held daily and thousands of people visit these temples to have glimpse of the deities. On the first of *Har*, a fair takes place at the top of Bari hill, attended by people coming from far flung areas specially from Bilaspur, Arki, Dhami, Kuthar and Hindur. Songs are sung in the praise of the deities and offerings are also made. Idols from villages Sanog, Buila and Deothal are brought in the litter preceded by local band consisting of drums and other instruments like *harsingha* and conch. On arrival on the hill the idols are placed in the temple where the four brothers are regarded to be meeting. Several goats are slaughtered. By the evening, deities repair to their respective places. A brisk trade, worth several thousand rupees, usually takes place during the fair. *Panchayat* and the Government look after the management of the fair. Its importance is on the increase.

**Jhal Fair (water fall) :** A legend is current amongst the people. One Nikku Ram, belonging to scheduled caste, resident of village Kiari used to work as cattle-herd of the villagers. He used to advise people to do good deeds and to occasionally help them. Once he went to Nalagarh to fetch loaf-sugar for his master. While returning the party sat near the bank of Ghamber rivulet to rest and to take their meals. One of them dropped a loaf of bread in the water for fish which swarmed the stream. The party out of fun, suggested that Nikku should give his loaf-sugar to the fish. He, accordingly, opened the knot of his sack and gave the entire loaf-sugar to the fish and filled the sack with sand. All ridiculed him and threatened to get him reprimanded by the owner. On their arrival, Nikku's sack was weighed first. Nikku emptied his sack and sugar instead of loaf-sugar was found. His fellow travellers were wonder struck and began to respect him.

Subsequently he started to let the cattle graze the green crops of villagers. The crops, however, would revert to their original state by the next morning. These miracles astonished the villagers.

The village, where Nikku was born, has a water fall of about 60 m, once a buffalo went to its brink and was about to fall. Nikku was sitting below the fall. He saw the buffalo's plight and stretched his hands and pushed the buffalo back to a safe place. For his feat he demanded that whenever in future a buffalo, from the breed of the saved buffalo, may calve the owner should offer some ghi at the place of incident. Since then he is obeyed accordingly.

After sometime Nikku fell ill and died. His corpse was cremated in a stream intersecting the road coming from Nalgarh. It is said that on the same day some villagers coming from Nalagarh met Nikku on the road in perfect state of health and enquired of him as to where he was going. He replied that he had set out to Badri Nath. When they reached the village, they came to know that Nikku was dead, but they would not believe it. In village Kiari a fair is held in his commemoration at the end of *Bhadon* and people take a bath at the place where he saved the buffalo and, propitiate him.

**Morsingi Fair :** Morsingi fair is held on the eighteenth of *Baisakh* in village Morsingi in tahsil Ghamarwin which is about one kilometre from Dari and about seven km from Ghamarwin. About two thousand men attend the fair. Sweets and general articles of merchandise including cheap cosmetics are the main items for sale in addition a cattle market is also held. According to an estimate nearly fifty heads change hands in a day. The fair is held under the auspices of village committee owning the site of the fair. The cattle are brought from Rugar.

The fair has some economic influence on the villages. Previously the villagers had to bring bullocks and other livestock from Nalwari fair at Bilaspur but now they can purchase them at Morsingi. The cattle which has to be disposed of previously at lower rates at home can profitably be exchanged with livestock traders at Morsingi. This fair is of recent origin being celebrated annually for the last about ten years. Previously no such fair used to be held in any part of the Ghamarwin tahsil.

**Bheanoo Pir Fair :** A two day fair in the name of Bheanoo Pir is held in Guddo village on the day following *Guga Naxmi*. About a thousand persons attend it. There is also a *than* (place) dedicated to Lakhdata (the bountiful) where his worshippers offer coins and grains. The offerings are appropriated by the chela of the Pir. The collection of grains, amount to about three quintals, besides ghi, pulses, *gur* and cash. People believe that offerings of grain to the Pir prevents diseases in cattle.

**Bhel Fair :** A fair is held in Bhel village on the third day of *Asuj*. The chela replies to the queries of the people and tells the causes of their offerings and diseases, usually attributed to the wrath of the *Paharia* (god). The chela prescribes slaughter of a goat or sheep or offering of *choorma* (sweet meat) to appease the *Paharia*. The local people have great faith in the deity and believe that his wrath always results in distress particularly to women.

### **Guga naumi Fair at Nagraon**

During the month of *Bhadon* the famous fair of *Guga naumi* is held at Nagraon in tahsil Ghamarwin. From first to the eighth day of *Bhadon* parties of singers go from house to house singing episode of Guga for which they get grains, from the villagers.

Generally the parties comprise scheduled-castes. They carry 'Guga emblem'. The emblem is an iron rod with its head shaped like the head of a snake. *Maulis* (red yarn) are tied to the emblem. The emblem is worshipped with incense in the morning before a party sets out for singing. A person holds a hour-glass drum in hand, another or two may carry *thalis* (plates) and beat them with light stick. This constitute the orchestra to accompany the songs of Guga. On the last day i.e. the day of *Guga naumi* the songs are sung on the *than* of Guga at Nagraon. About five hundred persons assemble in the fair for a day. There is a temple where people offer grain and coins, before Guga image, taken by the priests. Wrestling matches highlight this fair wherein the winning wrestlers are rewarded.

### **Fair of Bated Guga, Sadr Tahsil**

This fair takes place in Bated village every year during *Guga naumi* in the month of *Bhadon*. A temple exists here housing idols of Guga-eight days before the fair, exploits of Guga, are sung by the people. The people believe that Guga protects them from snake bites. On the *mela* day the people lay offerings.

### **The Nalwari Fair**

By far, the weeklong colourful, the most important and the biggest economic fair is the Nalwari fair, held at Bilaspur from the fourth to eleventh of *Chet*, that is towards the end of the third week of March every year. It is an institution as old as the hills. It seems that in early days when the inhabitants still led an unsettled life, they came down once a year to the spacious Sandhu field (now submerged in the Gobind Sagar) to sell or barter their cattle, agricultural and other produce and to take back with them a few necessities of life. Even up to the year 1936 the Nalwari fair was only an annual cattle market lasting for a week, but most of the people would come by day break to return home before nightfall, only the owner of cattle remaining behind. But from 1936 coinciding as it did with celebrations of the birthday of the then

heir-apparent, the cattle fair began to grow into a cinic fair to which more and more people started flocking year after year. A good trade is usually done. The traditional cattle market is still the most popular feature of the fair, modern innovations notwithstanding. The cattle, mostly plough bullocks, begin to pour in on the fourth of *Chet* the opening day of the fair. A large variety of breed of cattle from Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh are brought to the fair for exhibition and trade purpose. Bullocks and other cattle are mostly from Nalagarh and the neighbouring areas and sold to the zemindars of Bilaspur, and Mandi districts, as also to the adjoining villages of the Hamirpur and Una districts. By eighth of *Chet*, the ground is almost clear of them. There spring up a few shops and swings with the tom-tom to provide the exciting throbs. A few adventurous young men would display their physical prowess in the wrestling matches providing an additional attraction to the onlooker tired of the dull monotony of the cattle exchange. Previously the fair was held in Sandhu ground which has been submerged in the Gobind Sagar. It now takes place in a spacious ground in Lehnru village. About two thousand visitors daily come from far and near and participate in this famous fair. The transaction of about one thousand cattle heads takes place. To encourage right type of cattle-breeding, prizes alongwith commendatory certificates are given by the Government to the owners of selected breeds.

The selection of best cattle deserving awards is made before the market breaks off. New activities for the education and recreation of the people have been introduced. Exhibitions are organised by Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Industries, Medical and Education Departments. Drama-cum-variety show is held in aid of the Red Cross. The seven day programme includes a grand P.T. display under the National Discipline Scheme, film shows, *sangeet* and poetic symposia. The concluding programme is highlighted by wrestling but; in which renowned wrestlers of Himachal Pradesh, Haryana and the Punjab participate.

**The Republic day and the Independence Day :** Two national days like the Republic Day and the Independence Day, falling on 26th of January and 15th of August respectively are celebrated in this district with great enthusiasm. These red-letter days are celebrated mainly at the tahsil and the district headquarters, and attended by a large gathering of local people. The main highlights of the celebrations are flag-hoisting ceremony and games. Some cultural programmes are organised by school children and some Government agencies. At district headquarters, generally the Deputy Commissioner, unfurls the tri-colour, and delivers a short speech. In the evening documentary films are shown. Sometimes sweets are distributed and prizes are given away to the winners in the various games. At the tahsil headquarters similar celebrations take place under the supervision of the Tahsildar. In the rural areas these celebrations have yet to take firm roots.

### Public games

Besides the songs, dances, fairs, festivals and gatherings the people derive a good deal of amusement by having resort to play, games and sports. Traditionally, games and sports fall into two broad categories viz. the out-door and indoor. Many of these are different for two sexes. Though people belonging to different age groups play different games according to their aptitude and stage in life yet the children are apt to imitate the elder in this respect in many cases. These are games which are played only for the fun but there are many others indulged in either to win a reward or for a name. Games with an element of reward, penalty and loss are indulged in by certain selected and adept persons. Commoners only derive their amusement by witnessing such games. Although a variety of such plays, games and sports (to be described shortly) are found in this district yet it will be no exaggeration to say that majority of the population does not indulge in actual participation but only amuse itself by being spectators.

With the opening up of numerous schools in all parts of the district games of the school-stage have been introduced into every nook and corner of the area. These include *kabaddi*, football, cricket, hockey, tug-of-war, etc. among the out-door games and carrom, ludo, snakes and ladder etc. among the in-door games. Due to the hilly nature of the area participation in the out-door games continues only during the studentship whereafter it is only rarely that they may find time to play. Due to some reason such out-door games have not gained any popularity among the masses. Another reason for less indulgence in such games is that the population is predominantly agriculturist and they hardly find time enough to be free for such an activity. The women, as a matter of fact, do not at all play any out-door games. The games played in and propagated by educational institutions being apart there are certain other games and sports popular among the masses. Some of them may be mentioned.

**Chhinj (wrestling match) :** A traditional out-door game of adults and boys is widely prevalent in this district. A wrestling bout is generally held in honour of Lakhdata (the bountiful), a local deity of the fulfilment of desires by a devotee. People and wrestlers from many villages assemble. The organiser of the *chhinj* pronounces loudly, "O Lala Pir Lakhdata, my desire has been fulfilled and therefore, I am organising a *chhinj* in your name, help me in future too." And then the contest starts. The number of assembled persons ranges from one thousand five hundred to two thousand, and the assemblage becomes an important fair. Shops are set up. The organiser pays rewards in cash to the wrestlers.

**Swimming :** Satluj river and many rivulets wind their ways through this district, which have to be crossed and recrossed by the local people almost daily and even more than once in a day in pursuit of normal functions



of livelihood. Therefore, boys and adults, out of sheer necessity and also as a fun acquire the knack of swimming. In off season, particularly in summer, this becomes a good pastime and recreation either alone or in company. During monsoon when streams are in spate, swimming contests for the sake of fun or amusement may be, organised here and there in which a good number of people participate. Elders, ladies and children come to enjoy the *tamasha* (fun).

**Jhoola or Peeng :** This is another out-door recreation and pastime. During the rainy season *peengs* (swings) are hung from pipal or other trees where all men and women, young and old enjoy swinging.

**Kabaddi :** This is an out-door game played between two parties. It is generally played by children and boys; occasionally by adults also. The participants in this game should be physically strong and stout and mentally alert.

**Lukmachani (Hide and Seek) :** This is played only by the children of tender age group, wherever they can get hiding places. This is played in two ways. A boy is chosen and blindfolded. The remaining players get aside to hide. One of the hidden children signals with shouts, the seeker unfolds his eyes, and starts seeking the hidden players. The player who is touched by the seeker, replaces him, and is similarly replaced by another in a similar process. The other method is that a boy's eyes are blindfolded with a piece of cloth or handkerchief and the other players do not go to any hiding place but stay on running hither and thither to avoid a touch by the seeker. Discovery and touching of a player by the seeker is marked by loud hilarious shouts and in the former method all come from their hiding places and in the latter the touched child becomes the seeker and the game re-starts.

**Guli-danda :** This is an out-door game generally played during the winter season in almost every village either in the village green, wherever one exists or even in a courtyard it is the cheapest game in the rural area inasmuch as it requires only two small pieces of ordinary wood, everywhere readily available. In spite of the cheap material, it entails a good deal of physical exercise so much desirable for building up the body of young children. It is a man's sport usually played by the children and the boys and by adults. Sometimes an enthusiast may be found busy with *guli-danda* without any company.

### **Recreation clubs and associations**

Like any other hilly areas the people of this district have been leading, from the earliest times, a secluded life and, at the same time, a very hard life. Their means and the modes of life precluded them from establishing any associations or clubs for their recreation in the sense these bodies are understood today. They had their distinct sociological traits which they

continue to preserve without great changes. With the passage of time, however, new ideas started coming into currency in these parts too and started effecting the way of thinking of those who were socially higher, economically better and politically powerful. During his reign Raja Anand Chand in an effort to encourage social contacts and to form the habit of co-operative thought and deed it was unsuccessfully planned to associate people in village clubs. The cause of scheme was interrupted due to outbreak of the Second World War. Nevertheless, in Bilaspur proper where the residents were educated in comparatively large number and where the need for club life was being felt, a club, namely Shree Anand Club was started somewhere before 1942-43. To begin with, its membership was restricted to senior State Officers and a few notable people of the town. This was opened only for male members. It was housed in an old building near the palace which had been suitably modernized to accommodate a library (2,200 volumes), a billiard room, a card and games room, and a sitting-cum-reading room. There was a separate committee room provided for occasional privacy, if so desired. There was a plan also to start another club for the remaining State servants and for the people of the town in general in a suitable building which was intended to be provided.

The ruler was it is said, anxious to provide amenities for a club for women too who by custom and tradition were confined within the four walls of the houses. Accordingly, a separate ladies club, namely, Shree Uma Club was founded. A building was especially put up to provide commodious room for ping-pong, another for in-door games, a library and adequate accommodation for sitting. The spacious terrace on the first floor of this building was designed for hot summer evenings when members could sit there and play with reasonable privacy. With the formation of Gobind Sagar in 1962 both these club buildings were submerged. Since then these clubs have ceased to function. Three badminton clubs, with activities confined to the game of badminton, are functioning at Bilaspur and Ghamarwin. These are New Bilaspur Township Badminton Club at Bilaspur, Government College Badminton Club at Bilaspur and Badminton Club Ghamarwin. A Kala Sangam Club in Bilaspur town has been formed by the youths of Bilaspur town to promote cultural programme viz, dramas, poetic symposium and *sangeet sammelans* etc. and to encourage the new generation to this field.

### Cinema

Necessary feature of modern life which to the people of the erstwhile State looked like an unheard of novelty was a Cinema house. It was 35 mm talkie worked by a diesel oil engine. The hall could accommodate roughly five hundred persons and was quite adequate though at times performances had had to be repeated because of their popularity. At the start a short verbal introduction to the audience was found necessary as they were not

used to the idea either of a screen, or the sound as it comes from a projector. The management was directly under the control of the *Ijlas-i-Alia*. The operators used to be trained at various centres at State expense. The selection of films was based on educational considerations as well as on those of simple amusement. Historical films in English as well as in Hindi were most popular.

The hall being situated in the Sandhu *majdan* has been submerged in the Gobind Sagar. However, a new Cinema-house has been constructed by the ruler which is run by electricity and is situated in the new township.

### Radio

Radio receiving set as a means of amusement was introduced in the erstwhile Bilaspur State by about the beginning of fourth decade of this century. By then it was no longer a luxury in the general sense. Its usefulness during the Second World War was great. In the Bilaspur area, as also elsewhere, it served as a great attraction for the people to trek long distances to come and listen to. When a set was taken to the mofussil in the year 1941 the people, flocked to the camp in great numbers. It was then possible to give them, during intervals, necessary talks on the war. They could hear correct war news at first hand. They could also benefit from rural as well as children's programmes of the All India Radio. With the passage of time radio has gained more and more popularity and there is hardly any part of the district where a radio receiving set is lacking. Leaving aside the number of privately owned radio sets there are 222 listening centres, each equipped with a radio set by the Department of Public Relations where people appreciate programmes broadcast and relayed from All India Radio, Simla and other stations, as these varied programmes cater to all shades or tastes of people.

### Religious plays and stories

Religious plays and *kathas* have also been in existence as attractive means of social reform and mass recreation, there are of course no professional *Ram lila* parties, *bhajan mandlis* and *katha* tellers in this district. The Kala Sangam club every year presents *Ram Natak* on *Dussehra*. Besides, similar parties are at Ghamarwin and Talai. During the *Navratras* every year the local people at some places, including Bilaspur, form parties to stage the life story of Rama and Sita. Crowds of people come daily to watch and enjoy the performance.

At places, narration of *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata* and *Shreemad Bhagwad*, invariably attended with songs, and stories and musical concerts attract hundreds of men and more of women. They provide not only a healthy forum of recreation, but if rightly managed, an unlimited source of general information and enlightenment. The erstwhile State used to appoint its own

preachers who performed these *kathas* in important centres.

### **Impact of abolition of *Zemindari* system**

The people engaged in the cultivation of land comprise two principal classes; the landlords and the tenants, having in existence from ancient times. The tenants class has been always at a disadvantageous economic position and subject to exploitation by the landlords. After the merger of States the new regime, in a bid to ameliorate the lot of tenants passed an Act known as the *Himachal Pradesh Abolition of Big Landed Estates and Land Reforms Act, 1953 (Act No. 15 of 1954)*. It came into force on the 26th of January, 1955. The Act provided for the abolition of the big landed estates and had reformed the law relating to tenancies including, *inter alia*, conferment of proprietary rights on the tenants in their tenancy lands on payment of compensation. The implementation of this Act had brought forth some satisfactory results though much more is expected to be done. Seventy-six big landed estates were hit by section 27 of the Act involving an area of about 1240 hectares assessed to land revenue amounting to Rs. 4,750.00. This area, though stands transferred and vested in the Government but the possession has not yet been taken over by the Government. As a matter of fact the area so vested in the Government is already in possession of the tenants and will continue under their possession. The Act provided for the tenants a right to acquire interests of landowner on payment of compensation. A new *Land Reforms Act* introducing, revolutionary changes for the benefit of the tenants has come into force. This will bring improvement in the social life of the people.

# Chapter IV

## AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION

### LAND UTILISATION

Land resources of a particular place are less dependent upon the extent of the geographical area as compared to the uses to which the land is actually put. Therefore, for assessing the production potential of land, it is important to have reliable and elaborate information, statistical and other, of land utilisation. More so because such information has now assumed greater importance in the context of planning for agriculture. The sub-joined table based on revenue returns, will serve to give an idea about the position of land utilisation in this district.

(Area in hectares)

| Particulars   | 1968-69  | 1969-70  | 1970-71  | 1971-72                |
|---|----------|----------|----------|------------------------|
| 1. Total geographical area by village paper             | 1,15,489 | 1,15,484 | 1,15,485 | 115485+546<br>(Ad hoc) |
| 2. Forests  | 12,027   | 12,027   | 11,888   | 11888                  |
| 3. Land not available for cultivation :—                |          |          |          |                        |
| (a) Barren and unculturable land                        | 3,416    | 3,431    | 3,556    | 3555                   |
| (b) Land put to non-agricultural uses                   | 16,317   | 16,314   | 16,816   | 16917                  |
| 4. Other uncultivated land excluding current fallows :— |          |          |          |                        |
| (a) Culturable waste                                    | 3,097    | 3,038    | 3,145    | 3137                   |
| (b) Permanent pastures and other grazing land           | 49,330   | 48,955   | 48,639   | 47957+546<br>(Ad hoc)  |

(c) Land under miscellaneous tree crops and groves not included in net area sown

36                      36                      36                      36

5. Fallow land :—

a. Current fallows                      1,531                      1,298                      1,268                      1313

b. Other fallows                      340                      268                      313                      295

6. Net area sown                      29,395                      30,127                      29,824                      3387

7. Area sown more than once                      22,298                      21,225                      22,403                      20842

8. Total cropped area                      51,693                      51,352                      52,227                      5,229

A stage has already been reached when no more of the uncultivated area can or should be diverted to cultivation and only those privately owned lands which have been out of cultivation and are lying as culturable waste on account of erosion and bad management practices are to be recovered and reclaimed for cultivation. For this purpose some areas are being reclaimed under the land development scheme for proper soil conservation measures on agricultural lands falling under the private holdings.

The scheme for soil conservation measures on agricultural lands envisages the terracing of cultivated fields, provision of sound water disposal system to save the land from the hazards of erosion from rain water, control the gullies advancing into agricultural lands; training of *chos* and streams and development of grass lands by introduction of superior species and better management practices. The average cost on these operations is subsidised to the extent of fifty per cent. These schemes are executed under the provisions of the *Himachal Pradesh Land Development Act, 1954*. In the *Assessment Report of Bilaspur*, drawn in 1933, the Settlement Officer has observed, "as all the 'Dehati' forest (Charand of the zamindars) are owned by the State, the culturable portions of them are sold as nautor to the zamindars on fixed rates. Before the sale is sanctioned, and before the land is even broken up, it is haphazardly classified as Anderli I, Anderli II, Baharli I, Baharli II, Kharetar or unculturable, and is immediately assessed to revenue at rates at which the lands of the village in which it is situated is done although the purchaser might eventually keep the whole of it as kharetar and never bring it under cultivation. The total land revenue (exclusive of cesses) of such nautors from time of the last Settlement up to Sambat 1984—85, (1927—28 A. D.) is 9,919/—."

"As compared with the figures of the last Settlement, cultivation has decreased nine per cent, and as compared with the last jamabandi of S. 1984 85 which contains all nautors it has decreased three per cent. On the other hand kharetar (Grass fields) has increased seventy-seven per cent and banjar twelve per cent. The obvious conclusion is that a large portion of the nautor area on which cultivation rates have been charged is still kharetar and banjar. It also appears that a good deal of Baharli II land, which according to its definition yields but one crop in two or three years, and looks banjar when fallow, has been classed as kharetar or banjar in the new measurements."

"There is a dearth of trees and well wooded forests in the State. During the regime of the late His Highness lands for nautor were indiscriminately and lavishly given from village charands resulting in the shrinkage of the grazing areas. The process has also denuded forests and hill sides of trees. There is great paucity of trees even for fuel, especially in the parganas of Sirycon, Tiyoan and Ajmerpore. It is most advisable to encourage zamindars to plant trees in selected areas of the village charands of villages where suitable man and land can be found. The zamindars would not become owners of the land by planting trees and looking after them; but would not be required to pay any revenue for the use of the land or for cutting trees and selling them."

In spite of above opinion of the Settlement Officer, it would seem that nothing tangible was done to bring about substantial improvement in the situation till another decade had rolled by. This impression is fully supported by what has been stated in the *Administration Report of Bilaspur* for the decennium ending 1942—43.

The acute paucity of agricultural land was further precipitated with the construction of Bhakra Dam resulting in the formation of a great lake submerging under its waters large tracts of valuable lands wherefrom a sizeable part of the population of this district was shifted to other places within or outside the district.

## IRRIGATION

The importance of a well-developed irrigation system in a predominantly agricultural tract hardly needs an emphasis. In this district, where sizeable cultivated area is rain-fed, firm improvement in the production potential is obviously difficult to be brought about without adequate irrigation facilities. In view of the hilly terrain of the district, possibilities of undertaking major irrigation projects are very remote if not impracticable. As such, under the minor irrigation scheme, construction of *kuhls*, the main source of irrigation is resorted to. The region being largely undulated and

mountainous, cultivation is carried on in difficult and slopy terrain. This has led to small and scattered holdings. It has also led to terrace cultivation, quite a necessity, making extension of irrigation a precarious project.

only a very small percentage of the cultivated area is irrigated, in spite of the territory being an important watershed of the Satluj, and the smaller streams of the district. There is naturally total absence of tank and canal irrigation. It may be noted that water in *kuhls* is diverted from main *khads* by temporary *bunds* called *malauns*. These temporary *bunds* are often washed away during the rainy season and have to be reconstructed by the *ryots* almost every year.

The sources of water supply for irrigation purposes are generally inadequate. Private owned *kuhls* i.e. small water channels drawn from the springs and streams, are the only sources of irrigation. The Irrigation Wing of the P.W.D. and the National Extension Service Blocks (Development) are contributing to the construction of new *kuhls* wherever sources are available, and are repairing and remodelling the existing *kuhls* with the co-operation of the public. About the sources and supply line of artificial irrigation the *Assessment Report* drawn in 1933 contains the following account:-

"There are numerous streams to feed the Satluj, the principal ones are the following and their waters are harnessed for the purpose of irrigation in the district".

"Ali Khad rises in the Baghal territory and passing through the Bahadurpur Dhar joins the river Satluj at a distance of about 2 miles from Bilaspur. Ghamrola Khad also rises in Baghal territory and after draining the Ratanpur Dhar, joins the Satluj below Bilaspur. Monie stream only touches the Bilaspur district at village Palela where its waters are used for irrigating the land."

The irrigation very largely depends on rainfall. If it is scanty, the irrigation naturally suffers. Water channels have to be repaired every year. Their construction and maintenance involves considerable labour. Most of the cultivation lies on hill sides. The fields are narrow, in some places so narrow that human agency for ploughing has to be substituted for plough and bullocks. The fields require big retaining walls to be put up which have to be repaired every year after the rains. Further on, the *Assessment Report* states in more precise terms, "The streams supply approximately 40 per cent of the total irrigation in the State the rest (60 per cent) being obtained from springs which are to be found in many villages which run throughout the year, or temporarily, ceasing to be of any use for some months before the rains set in. Water for irrigation is carried from the source by means of "Kools" or water channels, which are ordinarily about 12 inches wide and 9 inches deep. The



Zamindars make them themselves. Their construction is not very expensive".

The old \*Gazetteer compiled in 1910 says, "Five per cent of the cultivated area is irrigated. The means are the ordinary hill Kuhls. Most of the irrigation is cis-Satluj in the Bahadurpur pargana". After the merger of the State and commencement of five year plans there has been marked improvement and the Government is spending considerable amounts to improve agriculture in this area as elsewhere.

The sub-joined statement containing statistics about the sources of irrigation and the area irrigated therefrom will serve to give a broad idea regarding the extent of wet cultivation in the district, during the past 5 years.

| Specification of source.                              | 1966-67 | 1967-68 | 1968-69 | 1969-70 | 1970-71 |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| No. of private wells used for irrigation purpose only | 24      | 24      | 24      | 24      | 24      |
| No of wells used for domestic purpose only            | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| Private canals  | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| Government canals                                     | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| Tube-wells  | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| No. of wells not in use                               | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| No of reservoirs                                      | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| No. of tanks  | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| Net area irrigated by:-Govt. canals                   | —       | —       | —       | 19      | 38      |
| Private „   | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| Tanks   | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |

\*Simla Hills State Gazetteer, 1910.

|  |      |      |      |      |      |
|--|------|------|------|------|------|
| wells  | 8    | 8    | 8    | 8    | 31   |
| Other sources  | 1936 | 1968 | 1965 | 2006 | 3567 |
| Total  | 1944 | 1976 | 1973 | 3113 | 3636 |
| Net area irrigated to net are sown                         | 7%   | 7%   | 7%   | 7%   | 7%   |
| Area irrigated more-than once in the same year (hectares). | 17   | 17   | 18   | 17   | 17   |
| Gross area of crops irrigated (hectares).                  | 36   | 36   | 39   | 37   | 36   |
| Total irrigated area to total sown area                    | 7%   | 8%   | 7%   | 8%   | 8%   |

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There could not be appreciable increase in the number of wells for water supply. This is generally due to the fact that irrigation in this hill district either from its principal river, the Satluj, or from the water impounded in Bhakra Dam is not possible. Canals, lakes, tanks and tube-wells are yet to appear on the scene of the district.

Obviously a very large part of the cultivated area has still to depend entirely on rainfall for obtaining moisture. In such areas crops are sown following a sufficient rainfall during the sowing season.

**Soil erosion and silting; protective bunds :** One thing towards which efforts are being made is the necessity of so managing every plot of land that the chemical minerals essential for production, in the soil, silt or alluvium are not washed away. It makes incumbent on the concerned agency to see that the fields in the area are properly bunded and terraced so that moisture and necessary ingredients are duly retained by the soil. This has to be and is being achieved gradually by steady methods.

The term "protective bunds" is, in the present context, capable of two different interpretations. Firstly to enclose and secondly to embank. Both meanings hold equally good in their application to the protection of crops. So far as the protection of crops by bunds i. e. by raising walls along the periphery of a cultivated plot of land is concerned the practice would seem to be hardly in vogue, at least to any appreciable extent, in any part of the district. What the agriculturists would appear to do for the protection of crops from thieves, wild and domestic animals, and other

depredators, is to provide a fence of thorny bushes all round the cultivated field.

There may be a few instances where the thorny bushes are substituted by stones piled up in a rough wall. As the fields are generally on slopy gradient retaining walls are provided to the fields almost invariably and these walls, to some extent check the erosion. As regards the second meaning i.e. embankment of local streams, streamlets, rills or nullahs the system of providing bunds would not appear to be in vogue warranting any detailed description. Nevertheless fields are to a very large extent, provided with terraces to counteract the menace of soil erosion ultimately resulting in silting.

Soil erosion, more or less a constant problem is responsible for heavy losses of fertile soil. Water is the principal eroding force. Erosion is a menace to the fields, forests, grazing lands and Gobind Sagar Reservoir. It is difficult to estimate the extent of erosion, but the reasons are known and the causes are obvious. Erosion has been leading to three grave consequences (i) the disappearance of soil fertility and even cultivable land, (ii) the silting of the rivers and the few water courses and particularly, the Gobind Sagar Reservoir, and (iii) the gradual undermining of the forest area by loosening the soil and denuding the forests of their fertility and the trees of their foot-holds.

The causes and reasons of soil erosion having been discussed it remains to be seen what measures were adopted or are being adopted for the prevention and eradication of the menace of soil erosion that has been prevalent in the district. The Himachal Pradesh Government has of late, launched a planned programme to check the soil erosion. A two pronged attack is being made through the Forest Department, concerned mainly with the uncultivated waste land including the forest areas, and by the Agriculture Department, mainly tackling the task in so far as the cultivated land is concerned.

The schemes undertaken for implementation by the Forest Department includes (i) main soil conservation schemes for Bhakra catchment area, (ii) Bhakra catchment soil conservation scheme, (iii) closure of areas for regeneration for a period of fifteen years, (iv) contour trenching for breaking the velocity of the run off and to trap the silt, (v) sowing and planting of economic and fast growing species, (vi) introduction of grasses for improvement of shallow soils, (vii) construction of check dams and gully plugging and (viii) contour bunding and terracing of agricultural lands and providing proper disposal arrangements of the rainwater.

The Agriculture Department has taken up land improvement and anti-erosion schemes with special emphasis on soil conservation measures like contour bunding, bench terracing and construction of check dams on the agricultural lands. These schemes, in addition to their demonstrative value, are calculated to go a long way in bringing out improvement in the forests as well as cultivated lands minimising the incidence of menace of soil erosion.

**Water potential and possibilities of further exploitation :** Generally speaking, the geological formation of the district would at first seem to suggest that scope for extension of irrigation beyond what has already been achieved in this direction by the cultivators, independent of the aid from the Government, is highly restricted. Nevertheless, a closer and more detailed survey, study and examination of the potential water resources are likely to yield some fruitful results. Past history of the tract reveals that nothing was ever done by way of scientific survey for the assessment of water potential for irrigation and even at present such sort of scheme has not been seriously contemplated leaving aside the execution, but all this does not mean that there are no chances at all for extension and improvement in the irrigational facilities by exploitation of potential water resources.

The Satluj and many other streams as also springs are the available sources. It is these age-old and unharnessed sources of water towards which one can look with hope for exploiting them for purposes of irrigation. As it was not within the financial capacity of the erstwhile rulers to harness, wherever possible, these waters systematically and on a planned basis for the benefit of the cultivators, it was entirely left to the initiative and effort of the concerned cultivators themselves to utilise them.

After the merger of Bilaspur into Himachal Pradesh it came under the fold of the Five Year Plans. To improve and extend irrigational facilities by renovation of the existing water resources and also by construction of new channels etc., the achievements, made by the N.E.S. Blocks or the Public Works Department, tend to point out to a bright future, for the exploitation of the waste potentials. The available statistics show that schemes covered an area of four hundred and eighty acres during the First Five Year Plan six hundred acres during the Second Five Year Plan, 2,849 acres of land during the Third Five Year Plan and another area of 1,028 acres during the year 1970-71 and 71-72. Undertaking, execution and completion of these schemes has established, beyond doubt, that there has been, as there still is, scope in the matter of harnessing the potential water resources and thus extending the area under irrigation.

As canals are not possible and water lifting scheme would take some more time and resources, the only source of harnessing and directing the water to the fields remains to be the traditional *kuhls*. The most modern

substitute of the traditional *kuhl* is lying of the pipe-lines although the cost involved is too high. It is comparatively easier to impound waters at convenient places in the streams and nullahs and at the source of a spring and to direct it to the cultivated areas which fall below such water heads. If every drop of water so available, and which at present go waste by flowing uselessly down the *khaats*, is exploited for irrigation purposes there are good reasons to believe that an appreciable increase in the irrigation area would be possible. Cultivated areas which lie above the water source on the sides, shoulders or on the tops of hills are bound to remain unirrigated for all times to come, unless means are found when it may become possible to lift water from the depths to the heights.

## AGRICULTURE

**Soils and Crops :** The soils of this district vary from sandy loam to loam with pockets of clay loam. Sandy loam soils contain about sixty per cent of loam and forty per cent of sand. There are some patches of pure sand. There are silt deposits near the river and *khad* beds. Most of the cultivated soil is of the kind known in the plains as *rausli*, a light and somewhat sandy soil. This is inter-mixed with patches of stiff clay (*dakar*). *Dakar* or *gori* is the land which hardens with the drying up of the water and can be ploughed with some difficulty. This kind of land is not much in the district. Neither of these is naturally more than moderately fertile. The zamindars themselves generally use the dual classification of irrigated land as *kulhant* and unirrigated land as *ba'hal*. This was adopted and extended in the last settlement of 1933, irrigated land being divided into two classes, first and second, and unirrigated into two groups, *andarli* (land close to the village and so well manured) and *baharli* (land at a distance from the village). The latter of these is sub-divided into first and second class according to the distance and fertility. *Kuhli awal* is the land which is always heavily manured and adequately irrigated, regularly gives at least two crops in the year and occasionally a third. This land is ploughed twice, viz., once immediately after the standing crop is out, and a second time when seed is sown for the next crop, the sowing and ploughing being done simultaneously. The favourite crop of this class of land is paddy in *kharif*, and wheat in *rabi*, but the most paying crops are ginger, *haldi* (turmeric), *kachalu* (*Arum colocasea*) and vegetables in *kharif*, and wheat, tobacco and vegetables in *rabi*.

*Kuhli doem* is the land which gets lesser water for irrigation and is irrigated later on. It is not of good kind. Paddy in *kharif* and wheat in *rabi* are sown and its yield is less as compared to that of *kuhli awal*. The land which is sown with maize and *ragi* in *kharif* and with wheat and barley in *rabi* is also included in this class.

*Bakhal* is the land entirely dependent on rain and is also known as *barani*. It has two kinds, *andarli* and *baharli*. *Andarli* is the land which is called *lahr* in Kangra. Its value is good. It is further divided into two kinds *andarli awal* and *andarli doem* but the difference *inter se* is insignificant. *Andarli awal* is the best unirrigated land and receives plenty of manure. It is also easily guarded. It always yields two crops in a year. As it is never allowed to remain fallow, it is ploughed immediately after a crop is out. Once again at the time of sowing the next crop when like irrigated land, sowing and ploughing is done simultaneously. Its favourite crop is maize, along with turmeric, ginger, sugarcane and *kachalu* in the *kharif* and wheat along with barley, *musur*, mustard, gram and *berda* in *rabi*. It also grows paddy but not as extensively as *andarli doem*. The most paying crops of this class are turmeric, ginger, *aini* seed and tobacco. In the pargana of Bahadurpur two crops in three years are grown in this land and is regarded as *andarli awal*. *Andarli doem* is the land which is always manured and is at some distance from the *andarli awal*. If the rains are plenty and timely, two crops in a year are grown in this land. It is ploughed for *kharif* in the month of January and again in March. If there is rain, it is sown with paddy in April otherwise maize and *ragi* are sown in May-June. The final sowing and ploughing are done simultaneously. In the *kharif* maize, paddy, *ragi*, cotton and black gram are sown and in the *rabi* wheat, *berda* and gram. But its favourite crop is paddy. After the *rabi* the land is prepared for next *kharif* in the middle of April-May. Lands lying near the banks of river, known as *belt bela* always sown with wheat in *rabi*, are regarded as *andarli doem*. It gives at least three crops in two years and often two crops in a year. The most paying crops of this class are sugarcane and paddy. The only difference between the *andarli awal* and *doem* is that while the former lies near habitations and cattle pens, the latter is situated at some distance from them and hence does not receive the same amount of manure and attention as the former.

*Baharli* is the class of land which lies at a distance from *andarli* and is also known as *banjar*. This is usually a stony land and manure is put into it or it can be well looked after. It is also of two kinds, *baharli awal* and *baharli doem*.

*Baharli awal* is the best unmanured land. Ordinarily it yields one crop in a year. The land is ploughed once in December and again in March-April, after which it is sown and ploughed simultaneously and *kharif* is sown. Its favourite *kharif* crops are maize, cotton, black gram, sesame, *moth*, *chury*, *ragi* and *mash* and if the rains are favourable gram mixed with wheat is cultivated in *rabi*. It will thus be observed that often this class of land yields three crops in two years, though it is never manured.

*Baharli doem* is known as *baihed banjar* also. It is the most inferior class of cultivated land. It consists of stony and poor soil lying on slopes at considerable distance from habitations. It is exposed to depredation by wild animals and seldom receives proper attention of the cultivator. It yields, at best, one crop in a year and generally one crop in three years. Once in every two, three and four years *kulth* and *shonk* in *kharif* and gram in *rabi* are cultivated. It is ploughed only once in June-July or July-August. Timely and adequate rains ensure good yield of *kulth* and gram. On the whole its out-turn is poor. Under the category of uncultivated land, *kharetar* or *ghasni*, grass for fodder or for covering roof of houses is grown. *Banjar kadim* means uncultivated land including pastures and *gair mumkin* including streams, streamlets, nullahs, paths, houses and hills.

The following table will show, at a glance, tahsil-wise irrigated area (in hectares) of crops in respect of Bilaspur district for the year 1970-71 and 71-72.

| Name of crops    | 1970-71     |                  |       | 1971-72     |                  |       |
|------------------|-------------|------------------|-------|-------------|------------------|-------|
|                  | Tahsil Sadr | Tahsil Ghamarwin | Total | Tahsil Sadr | Tahsil Ghamarwin | Total |
| Rice             | 709         | 661              | 1370  | 616         | 658              | 1274  |
| Wheat            | 864         | 612              | 1476  | 856         | 644              | 1500  |
| Barley           | 9           | —                | 9     | 16          | —                | 16    |
| Gram             | 29          | 25               | 54    | 51          | 55               | 106   |
| Horse-gram       | 4           | —                | 4     | 3           | —                | 3     |
| Musur            | 2           | 1                | 3     | 5           | 1                | 6     |
| Sugarcane        | 17          | 7                | 24    | 30          | 8                | 38    |
| Potato           | 4           | 1                | 5     | 5           | —                | 5     |
| Misc. food-crops | 70          | 64               | 134   | 55          | 13               | 68    |
| Ginger           | 41          | —                | 41    | —           | —                | —     |
| Maize            | 337         | 97               | 434   | 374         | 91               | 465   |
| Tobacco          | 28          | 17               | 45    | 25          | 14               | 39    |
| Rape & mustard   | 7           | 1                | 8     | 6           | 1                | 7     |

### Major and subsidiary crops

Principal crops that are grown in this district in various parts and on different soils and altitudes have been briefly mentioned above. The agricultural methods and practices, both traditional and modern, if any, in respect of some of the principal crop may now be mentioned with advantage.

Generally speaking only two crops in a year are grown. These are, the autumn (*kharif* crops) and the spring (*rabi* crops). Occasionally and on a lesser scale *zaid rabi* (additional spring crop) may be cultivated. In the matter of area as well as produce the *kharif* is the principal harvest. The most important crops raised are, maize, paddy, ginger, sugarcane, *kulth* and *mash*. Almost all the *kharif* crops are generally put into the soil during May-June and are ready for reaping by September-October. Method of cultivation of each crop is as follows :

### Mode of cultivation

Most noticeable feature of the method of cultivation is the absence of mechanized cultivation. The land is usually cultivated by means of plough and seed is usually broadcast with hand and is known as *chhats*. There are patches which do not admit of plough and have therefore to be dug with hoe.

**Maize :** It is the chief staple food of the people grown very extensively throughout the district. At higher elevations it is generally sown in fields kept fallow in the previous *rabi* season and as such sowing is done early in the end of April or beginning of May, while at the mid and low elevations sowing is done in the beginning of June.

**Paddy :** Paddy is sown in two different ways viz. by broadcasting the seed direct into the fields and by raising the seedlings in the nursery and then transplanting. The broadcast method is generally followed in areas where the paddy is grown as a *barani* crop while the transplanting method is in vogue in the irrigated areas.

Sowing of seed direct into the fields is done in two different ways. In the first, called the *battar* field is ploughed twice, then watered and when the water has dried, seed is sown and pressed with *sohaga* (leveller). In the second method called the *chhaip* the seed is first kept moist for eight to ten days to germinate and then sown by broadcast in the field which has been thoroughly ploughed and watered. The nursery is also raised for transplanting, and, the method is locally known as *auhni*. Firstly, the seed is kept for germinating in moist gunny bags and then sown in heavily manured nursery beds in standing water. The seedlings are ready for transplanting in two to three weeks time and the transplanting is done in thoroughly prepared fields in standing



water. Sometimes puddling is also done by ploughing and levelling the field in water before transplanting. The improved 'Japanese method of paddy cultivation', in which the nursery is sown in seed beds is being advocated by the Agriculture Department because the seedlings raised in this way are sturdier and give better crop after transplanting. It is finding favour with the cultivators and they are adopting it. The transplanting of seedlings in lines as recommended in the Japanese method of paddy cultivation is being taken up on small scale by some of the progressive cultivators who use improved implements like paddy weeder, if the crop is sown in lines.

**Ginger :** This crop is generally sown in the month of May. For raising this crop three ploughings, two weedings and harrowing-cum-earthing up are absolutely necessary. The crop is generally harvested towards the end of December. It is cultivated in pargana Bahadurpur and in certain villages of pargana Ratanpur, Fatehpur and Bilaspur. It is dried and sold at a higher rate; a part of it being sold as green.

**Sugarcane :** This crop is grown in the areas where irrigation facilities exist. Sowing is done in the month of March and the crop attains the maturity in December and January. The crop requires intensive cultivation practices like thorough preparation of land and inter-culture operations etc.

As regards the *rabi* crops sowing is generally done in the month of September and October and are ready for reaping by about April and May. The most important crops are wheat, barley, and wheat and gram mixed.

**Wheat :** It is sown as a major *rabi* cereal crop all over the district. Sowing starts in the month of October at higher elevations and continues up to the middle of November in the low lying areas. The crop is ready for harvesting in the end of April at low elevations and is harvested as late as the middle of June in the high hills.

**Barley :** This crop is sown in much the same way as wheat and is ready for harvesting earlier than wheat, for which reason it is sown more at higher elevations so as to make the land able for the sowing of *kharif* crops in time. The Department of Agriculture has not so far introduced an improved variety but yield trials with a number of varieties are being conducted on government farms to find out the varieties best suited to the soil and climatic conditions.

**Gram :** Gram is generally sown in the external lands and its yield depends upon rain. It is put into the land from the end of August till the end of September.

Besides these major crops there are certain subsidiary crops too, such as the oil seeds, vegetables etc.

**Oil seeds :** *Sarson* (mustard) and linseed are the two oil seed crops which are grown in this district. Improved varieties of both the crops have been introduced and these are *raya* L—18 and B. S. G. I. of *sarson* and K—2 of linseed. The yield of these are higher than the local varieties.

**Vegetable crops :** Vegetables of different varieties are grown by the people in the kitchen gardens or homesteads on a very small scale for their own consumption rather than for marketing. Now that the area has been opened up for motor transport, there are possibilities for introducing vegetables on irrigated lands, with a view to providing cash crop to the people. At present there is practically no cash crop. The Agriculture Department is taking steps to propagate growing of vegetables and more and more area is being brought under vegetables both to meet the demands of home consumption and for sale in the market as cash crop. Seeds of improved varieties are arranged by the department from outside the Pradesh as well as from the government farms, within Himachal Pradesh for distribution to cultivators to encourage them to increase the area under vegetables.

The sub-joined table will help to give an idea about the area as well as yield of each important crop. The table contains figures for the last five years.

Area under different crops (in acres) and total yield of different crops (in tons)

| <i>Kharif</i>    | 1967-68 |       | 1968-69 |       | 1969-70 |       | 1970-71 |       | 1971-72 |       |
|------------------|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-------|
|                  | Area    | Yield | Area    | Yield | Area    | Yield | Area    | Yield | Area    | Yield |
| Paddy            | 10171   | 3736  | 9125    | 2484  | 9723    | 2475  | 9708    | 3117  | 10250   | 3000  |
| Maize            | 46396   | 16736 | 48750   | 20489 | 52816   | 21029 | 52838   | 23503 | 51250   | 15700 |
| Sugarcane        | 718     | 219   | 350     | 300   | 1400    | 900   | —       | —     | —       | —     |
| Ginger           | 124     | 50    | 135     | 54    | 131     | 108   | 129     | 106   | —       | —     |
| Mash             | 3905    | 281   | —       | —     | —       | —     | —       | —     | —       | —     |
| <i>Rabi</i>      |         |       |         |       |         |       |         |       |         |       |
| Wheat            | 36292   | 9745  | 12537   | 14118 | 48570   | 11600 | 47448   | 12263 | 41654   | 10900 |
| Barley           | 300     | 100   | 200     | 300   | 200     | 100   | 1600    | 700   | 500     | 300   |
| Gram             | 2900    | 1400  | 1700    | 700   | 2100    | 1100  | 3500    | 1900  | 4250    | 700   |
| Tobacco          | —       | —     | 250     | 85    | 250     | 90    | —       | —     | 250     | 100   |
| Rape and mustard | —       | —     | 550     | 25    | 500     | 45    | —       | —     | 250     | 100   |
| Potato           | 75      | 30    | 63      | 20    | 47      | 22    | 39      | 19    | 97      | 17    |

### Changes in the area under different crops

So, far there has been no phenomenal change in the area under different crops and as of old the cereal crops continue to be sown more readily and preferably to the cash and commercial crops. The reason is that firstly it has not been possible to extend irrigation facilities to any considerable areas due to problems like soil erosion, and only a few new irrigation channels have been constructed in addition to what already existed.

### Progress of scientific agriculture

**Agricultural implements :** The primitive tools and implements that are in use in the district include *hal* (plough) for preparatory tillage as well as for hoeing, *deh* (leveller) for levelling and breaking of clods, *mesh* (leveller) for levelling of puddles in paddy fields, *dendal* (harrow) for breaking the crust of soil after rain, *kudal* (hoe) for hoeing and weeding, *karandi* (trowel) for mending the bunds of paddy fields before transplantation and *pharwa* (spade).

These are widely used and are not being replaced speedily because these are suitable to the local conditions. During the ruler's regime the ball had been set rolling in the matter of directing the attention of the farmers towards the improved implements in so far as some of them were kept, for demonstration purpose on the model farm at Auhar. These included Meston plough, the barred harrow, India plough, hoe, sugarcane crushing machine and fodder cutter (*gandasa*).

At present the Agriculture Department is trying to introduce certain modern implements and have achieved some success in establishing their popularity. These include Meston plough, bar harrow, hand hoe, paddy weeder, spade and fodder cutter. The succeeding table is indicative of the number of certain traditional and modern implements recorded during the year 1966.

| Agricultural Implements         |             | (Number)         |
|---------------------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Type of Implements              | Tahsil Sadr | Tahsil Ghamarwin |
| 1. Ploughs                      |             |                  |
| (a) Wooden                      | 14,859      | 21,878           |
| (b) Iron                        | 27          | 22               |
| Total                           | 14,886      | 21,900           |
| 2. Carts                        | 11          | 3                |
| 3. Sugarcane crushers           |             |                  |
| (a) Power driven                | —           | —                |
| (b) Bullock driven              | 156         | 35               |
| Total                           | 156         | 35               |
| 4. Oil engines                  | —           | 1                |
| 5. Electric pumps               | 3           | 5                |
| 6. Tractors                     | —           | —                |
| 7. <i>Ghanis</i>                |             |                  |
| (a) More than five <i>seers</i> | 22          | 20               |
| (b) Less than five <i>seers</i> | 10          | 13               |
| Total :                         | 32          | 33               |

### Seeds

After the merger of Bilaspur State into Himachal Pradesh, pointed attention has been paid, on extensive scale to secure tangible results in the matter of supply of better seeds, seedlings and plants. Emphasis has been laid particularly, on introducing disease-resistant and high yielding varieties of crops during the course of last few years. The important crops of which the improved varieties of seeds have been introduced by the Department of Agriculture include wheat, NP 770, NP 809, NP 792 and *Ridley*; Paddy-China 972, 1039, 988 and T-21; potatoes up-to-date, maize hybrid corn; *sarson*, *raya* L-18 and BSG I and linseed K-2. Certain nurseries,

orchards, seed multiplication-cum-experimental farms and seed multiplication-cum-demonstration farms have been established by the Horticulture and Agriculture Departments. The cultivators were immensely benefited by distribution of improved seeds, seedlings and plants as would be seen from the succeeding table :

Distribution of Improved Seeds and Seedlings

| Sl. No. | Name of seed and Seedlings | (Quantity in quintals/Nos.) |            |            |            |         |
|---------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|------------|------------|---------|
|         |                            | 1967-68                     | 1968-69    | 1969-70    | 1970-71    | 1971-72 |
| 1.      | Paddy                      | 7.7                         | 24.7       | 42         | 14.5       | 8.2     |
| 2.      | Wheat                      | 142.8                       | 250        | 146        | 150        | 69.9    |
| 3.      | Gram                       | 13.83                       | —          | 1.6        | 7          | 1.5     |
| 4.      | Sugarcane                  | 150                         | 345        | 23         | 750        | —       |
| 5.      | Vegetable seeds            | 5.3                         | 3.04       | 3.86       | 3.67       | 1.6     |
| 6.      | Vegetable seedlings        | 31,1303                     | No. 521016 | No. 856775 | No. 420357 | No.     |

It will not be out of place here to make a mention, that in order to popularise the transplanting of paddy after raising nursery by improved method as recommended in the Japanese method of Paddy Cultivation, the department raises buffer nurseries at the holdings of cultivators for free distribution. Likewise to encourage the growing of vegetables, seedlings and improved varieties are raised on the government farms as well as in the cultivators holdings and distributed alongwith the seeds of improved varieties.

**Manures :** Use of improved seeds is, no doubt conducive to increase the out-put of crops but to a certain extent only. To get still better results another device to improve out-puts is the application of suitable manures and thereby to increase the fertility of the soil. The cultivator, however, primitive in outlook, is nevertheless conscious of the fact that to save the land from barrenness, constant use of manures is unavoidable and has, therefore, been endeavouring to replenish the exhausting land with, what may be termed as the crude manures. Even at present the cultivator is fast clinging to his traditional methods of procurements, preservation and application of manures to his fields. It is the cattle wealth which is his mainstay for manures.

These defective and primitive practice for the preservation of manure as also the factors limiting the procurement of adequate quantity of manure have been detected by the Government. To bring about a general improvement in the manurial resources, methods and practices of preservation of manures and their application to different crops, necessary steps have already been taken. There are now Manure Supervisors in almost all the Community Development Blocks with a number of Village Level Workers scattered all over the area who endeavour to help the cultivator in developing his manurial means and methods by propaganda as well as practical demonstrations. They also induce the cultivator to cultivate plants fit for green manure and distribute fertilizers also. These efforts have achieved a certain degree of success though much remains still to be done. An idea of the result of the activities can be formed from the account that follows.

**Compost :** Dung, fresh or dry, is collected in heaps to which leaves and grass, used as bedding for the cattle, are added up and allowed to remain in the open till it is needed for application to the crops. It is then applied in whatever stage of decomposition it might have reached. To minimise the loss of useful ingredients like urine, and to ensure its complete decomposition, improved method of composting in trenches and in heaps is being recommended and it is becoming popular with the cultivators. Generally compost in the district is prepared, in the standard pits from the stubbles, cow-dung and the remains of plants etc. by placing them into the pit and finally when a pit is filled up it is covered up by earth and mud. The compost gets ready within three or four months. This sectional filling is also being recognised and adopted by the cultivators.

**Green manuring :** Cultivators in paddy growing areas use leaves of local wild growing shrubs like *basuti* and *kamwal* for green manuring of paddy fields and these local practices are being further popularised. The Department of Agriculture recommends the introduction of crops and mixed cropping of beans with maize to maintain the fertility of soil. These practices are slowly becoming popular.

**Chemical fertilizers :** To supplement, the limited supply of farm-yard manure, use of chemical fertilizers is being popularised by arranging demonstrations in cultivators fields. To encourage use of the fertilizers by the cultivators, distribution of sulphate of ammonia and super phosphate, has been taken up by the department itself through its sale depots opened at many places in the interior, to make supplies available within easy reach of the cultivators. The cost of transport from the factory up to the distribution centres is subsidized by the Government. There are about sixty fertilizer depots scattered throughout the district.

The following quantities of the fertilizers were distributed to the cultivators of this district during the past few years :—

## Quantity in m. tons

| Name of<br>fertilizer distributed | 1967-88 | 1968-69 | 1969-70  | 1970-71  | 1971-72  | 1972-73  | 1973-74 |
|-----------------------------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|----------|----------|---------|
| 1. Ammonium Sulphate              | 1.923   | 0.563   | Nil      | 192.700  | 131.695  | Nil      | Nil     |
| 2. Cane 20%                       | 115.480 | 39.568  | Nil      | 1.570    | Nil      | Nil      | Nil     |
| 3. Cane 25%                       | 91.575  | 673.835 | 1061.320 | 1108.591 | 1152.215 | 1091.921 | 992.700 |
| 4. Cane 26%                       | Nil     | 305.900 | 111.050  | 5.850    | 0.500    | 477.284  | 420.876 |
| 5. Ammonium Phosphate             | 9.200   | 15.497  | 4.277    | 9.750    | 22.427   | 0.300    | Nil     |
| 6. Super Phosphate                | 22.451  | 38.139  | 35.117   | 53.037   | 61.123   | 67.356   | 2.400   |
| 7. Dia ammonium Phosphate         | 3.200   | 22.608  | 14.452   | 41.090   | 27.900   | 27.900   | 13.050  |
| 8. German mixture 15:15:15        | —       | —       | —        | —        | 39.400   | 91.832   | Nil     |
| 9. Sulphate of Potash             | 2.000   | 1.350   | 1.355    | 4.119½   | 4.015    | 1532     | Nil     |
| 10. Murate of Potash              | 9.075   | 5.050   | 5.737    | 13.348   | 6.570    | 4.895    | Nil     |
| 11. German mixture 14x28x14       | —       | —       | —        | —        | —        | 0.101    | 7.963   |
| 12. Urea 46%                      | —       | —       | —        | —        | —        | 9.850    | 170.130 |



### Rotation of crops

The importance of manures having been described we now switch over to the role played by the rotation of crops in the maintenance and improvement of soil fertility. From time immemorial the cultivators are conscious of the beneficial effects obtained by the rotation of crops, followed by them mainly with the object of securing better yields. But scientific rotation is very essential for increased yield and preservation of the productivity of the soil. For this purpose, constant guidance and demonstration is necessary and is being provided as far as possible.

Generally speaking mixed farming is not practicable at all altitudes because of climatic and terrain factors. Leguminous crops have got the property to fix the atmospheric nitrogen. Their inclusion in rotation is, therefore, very helpful in the upkeep of fertility. By the inclusion of the green manuring crops, in the rotation, at regular intervals, the humus contents of the soil can be kept up.

**Fallowing :** About twenty to thirty per cent cultivated land is left fallow every year. The land during this fallow period receives fresh supplies of mineral plant food and develop the bacteria and thus help restore the fertility of the land to a considerable extent. Still better results in the shape of an increased yield are achieved from the fallow land if, as is mostly done, it is ploughed during the period of its rest and quite earlier than the actual tilling for putting the seed of a crop. Not only the fertility of the land left fallow is restored but also the cultivator finds time to pay adequate attention to its upkeep by repairing the damages to retaining walls and removing stones and prickly shrubs etc. The cattle are freely allowed to graze on the fallow land and during their roamings they deposit some cow-dung in it which is conducive to increase the fertility.

### Agricultural diseases and pests

Plant protection work has a great importance in the field of agriculture. The attack by diseases, pests and insects causes a considerable damage to the crops, fruits and vegetables. The Department of Agriculture has been active in eradicating these natural calamities, and increasingly large area is being treated against the rat nuisance and the crops are being saved by spraying insecticides and fungicides.

The common diseases of crops of grains are not unknown. *Khuli kungyaree*, for example, is found to be a most harmful disease. Yellow rust of wheat is prevalent. So is, "Paddy Brown Spot". Regular and frequent instructions by the department have been issued to the agriculturist about these agents of destruction. At times local methods too have been suggested against the scientific remedies applied to eradicate the menace of

these diseases include the substitution of local wheat strains by improved ones such as *ridley*, NP 809, etc. the only remedy for the control of rust. Rust resistance varieties as mentioned above are finding favour with the cultivators with appreciable results.

### Scientific methods of cultivation

A broad idea must have been formed by now from the foregoing account as to the role of the Agriculture Department in the development of traditional methods of agriculture in the district and thereby to raise the standard of living of the masses. It is now proposed to give in nutshell certain particular activities of the Agriculture Department.

There are so far as, no stations for fundamental research to evolve new varieties of crops or to conduct agronomic experiments in the district. Improved seeds of crops and cultural practices as recommended after trials at the research stations elsewhere in the Pradesh are, however, first tried on the departmental seed multiplication-cum-demonstration farms, progeny orchards and nurseries in the local conditions and those found useful are introduced and popularised by laying demonstration on the government farms and in the fields of progressive cultivators. A chain of such stations for trial, demonstration and multiplication are being established under different climatic conditions in the district and many, already established, are given below.

**Seed multiplication-cum-demonstration farm, Aur:** It was established in the year 1933 by the erstwhile Bilaspur State under the name of Model Farm, Aur on an area of about 129 bighas. It had a school, a store house, a living quarter and a cattle-shed on its site occupying about 18 bighas. One hundred and eleven bighas of the farm land was unirrigated, dependent entirely for moisture on the rain water. Various crops were raised on it and the resultant seed after its due examination for purity, immunity from disease and abundance of productivity was distributed to the zamindars. Now it extends over an area of about 20 acres out of which 16.9 acres are cultivable. The main object of this farm is to multiply improved seeds of crops for distribution to the cultivators.

**Seed multiplication farm, Deoth:** The farm was established in the year 1958 - 59, with a view to multiplying improved seeds of crops for distribution to the cultivators. It is situated at a distance of twenty-three kilometres from Bilaspur towards Simla on the Simla-Mandi via Bilaspur motorable road, at an altitude of about 915 m above the mean sea level. The total area of the farm is about 16.75 acres out of which 9.12 acres are cultivable and the main crops raised are paddy and wheat.

**Seed multiplication-cum-soil conservation demonstration farm, Barthin :** The farm is located at a distance of about ten kilometres from Ghamarwin on the Ghamarwin-Bhakra road at an elevation of about 550 m above the mean sea level. It was started in the year 1960, on an area of 20.95 acres, of which about 9.95 acres are under cultivation of crops like sugarcane, paddy, wheat, gram and mustard. The rest of the land is under gullies, being used for raising improved grasses, clovers, fruit trees and forest species for farm forestry. It is mainly a seed multiplication-cum-soil conservation demonstration farm and also demonstrates the science and art of the most rational and judicious land uses as also the conservation of soil and water.

### HORTICULTURE

Favourable agro-climatic conditions prevailing in Himachal Pradesh offer vast scope for the development of horticulture. Horticultural development has significantly supplemented the low income of the people of this Pradesh, and has gone a long way in ameliorating their economic conditions. Apart from this it has manifold impact on them like provision of nutritive diet to the people, checking up of soil erosion in the catchment areas of our national projects like Bhakra Dam, Pong Dam and Beas-Satluj Link etc., increasing employment potential of horticulture/agriculture-based industries and proper utilization of area which otherwise cannot be put to agricultural uses. Prior to the merger of State not much attention was paid to horticulture development.

Intensive horticulture development programme has been adopted in the district also. The climatic condition, fertility of soil, and altitude make this area, receiving about 1962.6 mm of annual rainfall, very suitable for the growth of fruits. The fruits grown here are mango, pomegranate, guava, fig, banana, *litchi*, citrus, peach, pear, plum and *papaya*.

#### The Area under different fruit crops

The following figures give the area in acres under fruits in the district since 1966-67.

| Year    | Other temperate fruits | Nut and dry fruits | Citrus | Other sub-tropical fruits |
|---------|------------------------|--------------------|--------|---------------------------|
| 1966-67 | 250                    | —                  | 200    | 600                       |
| 1967-68 | 280                    | —                  | 380    | 796                       |
| 1968-69 | 330                    | —                  | 430    | 846                       |
| 1969-70 | 341                    | —                  | 482    | 923                       |
| 1970-71 | 388                    | —                  | 572    | 1043                      |
| 1971-72 | 476                    | —                  | 685    | 1508                      |

The following chart throws light on the production of fruits in the district.

| Year    | Type of fruits         |                     | (Tonnes) |                           |
|---------|------------------------|---------------------|----------|---------------------------|
|         | Other temperate fruits | Nuts and dry fruits | Citrus   | Other sub-tropical fruits |
| 1967-68 | 190                    | —                   | 372      | 626                       |
| 1968-69 | 256                    | —                   | 450      | 818                       |
| 1969-70 | 332                    | —                   | 505      | 997                       |
| 1970-71 | 408                    | —                   | 581      | 1308                      |

#### Establishment and management of Progeny-cum-Demonstration Orchards

Himachal Pradesh was the first State in India to take up the important project of establishing progeny-cum-demonstration orchards. The scheme for the establishment of orchards is in operation for the last 13 years. Five Progeny-cum-demonstration orchards at Nihal, Baroha, Nihari, Saloa and Kothipura and two fruit nurseries at Kot Kahlur and Guru-ka-Lahour have been established in the district.

The locations and the varieties of plants/trees experimented/grown in each of the progeny-cum-demonstration orchard and nurseries are given below :—

**Progeny-cum-demonstration orchard, Nihal :** Formerly this nursery was situated at Kiar Khanesar over an area of about three acres. Seedlings of fruits like *papaya*, *phalsa*, guava, etc. were being raised and supplied to the cultivators, budded plants of citrus fruit such as *sangtra* and *malta* being raised. Grafted plants of peach and pear were also propagated in the nursery. As the original site of the orchard has submerged under the Gobind Sagar, it has been shifted to the new township of Bilaspur at an elevation of about 550 m above the mean sea level and was restarted in the year 1960. The area of this orchard now is about 4.80 hectares. The main aims and objects of this orchard are to serve as demonstration farm to the people that even somewhat ill-drained lands can be developed after providing an effective drainage system ; to propagate maximum number of fruit and ornamental plants for distribution to the growers at nominal rates, and to meet the growing demands of the residents of new Bilaspur township, in beautifying the surroundings of their dwellings, and to develop a small park to serve as a picnic and refreshing spot under a big banyan tree and its surrounds.

**Progeny-cum-demonstration orchard, Baroha :** Started in June, 1960, it is situated on Bilaspur—Jhandutta road at a distance of about forty kilometres from Bilaspur at an elevation of about 643 m above the mean sea level, on an area of about 1.5 hectares. It is meant to serve as demonstration farm to the local people, and to propagate maximum number of fruit plants for distribution at nominal rates to the growers of Gherwin Block area. Mango, *litchi*, *loquat*, citrus, peach, plum, apricot, *phalsa* and *papaya* are being raised here.

**Progeny-cum-demonstration orchard, Nihari :** The area of this station is about 2.05 hectares, situated at a distance of about forty kilometres from Bilaspur on the Ali Khad crossing Ghamarwin—Ladoror road, at an altitude of about 769 m above the mean sea level. The work at this orchard, was taken up here in March, 1962, with the aims and objects identical to other progeny orchards. An area of about 3.5 acres has been planted in which mango, *litchi*, citrus, guava, etc. are planted and in the rest 1.5 acres area nursery beds, are prepared and seeds of different fruits are sown to propagate fruit plants for supply to the growers.

**Progeny-cum-demonstration orchard, Saloa :** This orchard is situated at a distance of ten kilometres, by a foot path, from Bassi at an elevation of about 538 m above the mean sea level. Bassi is about nineteen kilometres from Kiratpur on Bilaspur-Ganguwal route. The area of the place is 5.20 hectares. The work here was taken up in October, 1962.

**Progeny-cum-demonstration orchard, Kot Kahlur :** It is situated in pargana Kot Kahlur of Bilaspur district adjoining the territory of the Punjab along Ganguwal Nangal area at a distance of 90 km from Bilaspur via Ganguwal and is exactly in the foot-hills of the famous Naina Devi temple, on an elevation of about 400 m above the mean sea level. The area of the orchard is 1.20 hectares. The work here was taken up in January 1963, with the same objects as in the case of other progeny orchards.

**Progeny-cum-demonstration orchard, Kothipura :** This orchard is situated on the Simla Mandi road via Bilaspur at a distance of about eighty kilometres from Simla and 10 km from Bilaspur at an elevation of 760 m above the mean sea level. The reclamation work was started in September 1957, on an area of about twenty acres. The orchard, apart from usual features, serves also the purpose of demonstration regarding utilization of the neglected and severely eroded land. There being no irrigation facilities, the land was put under *ber* (*zizyphus jujuba*) plantation, which is a highly drought-resistant plant, and good yielder of cheap fruit at a time when no other fruit is available. Besides, some other fruit plants were also planted to serve as fillers and to assess their performance under the sub-marginal conditions of soil and irrigation. *Ber*, pomegranate, guava, mango, fig,

citrus, *phalsa*, *litchi*, etc., are being grown in the orchard. In July 1961, another ten acres were added to this area, thus bringing the total area of the orchard to thirty acres. This additional unit is being planted with olive and pomegranate, under the scheme 'Research on Olive and Pomegranate.' This orchard has been transferred to the Animal Husbandry Department on 1st February, 1974, because this orchard was not economical for the horticulture purpose.

**Progeny-cum-demonstration orchard, Guru-ka-Lahour :** This orchard is situated at a distance of 90 km from Bilaspur via Ganguwal at an elevation of 362 m above the mean sea level. The work in this farm was taken up in the year 1964. The area of this farm is about 1.20 hectares.

#### Conversion of wild fruit trees into superior varieties

The top working of inferior and wild fruit trees into superior and economical varieties is a very important aspect in the development of horticulture in the district. A campaign is organised every year in this regard and *kainth* (wild medlar) trees are top worked with superior varieties of this species. The following table will show the progress made in this behalf.

| Year    | <i>Kainth</i> /other wild trees top worked |
|---------|--|
| 1969—70 | 70,000                                     |
| 1970—71 | 4,190                                      |
| 1971—72 | 34,250                                     |
| 1972—73 | 36,000                                     |

#### Nursery production work

The fruit plants of different kinds are produced in the fruit nurseries for distribution amongst the cultivators of the district. The information in respect of the fruit plants produced and distributed amongst the orchardists from the government fruit nurseries in the district during the last five years is

given below.

| Year    | Plants produced | Plants distributed |
|---------|-----------------|--------------------|
| 1969—70 | 21584           | 15625              |
| 1970—71 | 45586           | 21255              |
| 1971—72 | 10747           | 16676              |
| 1972—73 | 44484           | 32215              |
| 1973—74 | 77453           | 26816              |

#### Distribution of horticultural loans

Financial help in the form of long term horticultural loan is being given to the farmers. The distribution of this loan in the district for the last four years is given hereunder:

| Year    | Rs. Rupees |
|---------|------------|
| 1969 70 | 38,100     |
| 1970 71 | 38,500     |
| 1971—72 | 45,000     |
| 1972—73 | 29,990     |

#### Fairs and exhibitions

During the princely regime an exhibition of agricultural and horticultural produce used to be held annually at Bilaspur proper. This exhibition was held at the time of Nalwari Fair. It served as an incentive for "grow more and better food" campaign. Samples of strong and healthy seeds of every variety, got from the state-run farms, were placed for public observation. People used to send in the samples of their own agricultural produce of the year, most commendable, out of which received prize, and certificates of merit.

**Melas :** Melas which may be termed entirely and purely "the agricultural fairs", were however, not organised then. Nevertheless whenever any traditional fair is held in any part, the Department of Agriculture sends its contribution. With the introduction of Five Year Plans and the need to grow more food such exhibitions are being held more frequently.

### **Organisational set up**

The organisation of the Agriculture Department at the district level, to carry out the administrative routine and other programme consists of a District Agricultural Officer, Agricultural Inspectors, Agricultural Sub-Inspectors, Manure Supervisors and Agricultural Marketing Inspector.

There are three development blocks in this district as also seed multiplication farms for which additional staff has been engaged, consisting of Agricultural Extension Officers, Agricultural Sub-Inspectors, Manure Supervisors, Mukaddams etc.

The horticultural development activities in the district are under the control of a District Horticultural Officer, assisted by Horticultural Inspectors, Horticultural Supervisors and Horticultural Sub-Inspectors. One Horticultural Inspector has been provided at the Block level for looking after the horticultural extension activities.

## **ANIMAL HUSBANDRY**

### **Area under fodder-crops**

According to the 1951, 1961, 1966 and 1971 cattle censuses the total number of live-stock in the district was 1,30,259, 1,62,108, 1,17,054 and 1,99,187 respectively. The increasing number of live-stock obviously need great quantity of fodder and animal feed. As a matter of fact social and economic pattern of life in these hills lend special significance to animal husbandry. Next to the soil culture, the animal culture is the mainstay of the people. Successful agriculture is very largely dependent upon the animal husbandry. The agriculturists are now becoming conscious of the scientific and economic methods of rearing animals. The number of cattle that an agriculturist owns is regarded as a sign of social status notwithstanding the consideration of the utility, value and price of the animal products. Tradition and religious beliefs prohibit elimination of old, useless or unserviceable cattle even though such animals may prove uneconomical to the owner.

Growing of fodder-crops does not seem to be a practice universally accepted throughout the district. Revenue returns indicate that a negligible area, given in the succeeding table, was put under fodder-crops.



| Year    | Area under fodder-crops in acres |
|---------|----------------------------------|
| 1961-62 | 462                              |
| 1962-63 | 386                              |
| 1963-64 | 15                               |
| 1964-65 | 179                              |
| 1965-66 | 12                               |
| 1966-67 | 423                              |
| 1967-68 | 360                              |
| 1968-69 | 141                              |
| 1969-70 | 331                              |
| 1970-71 | 29                               |
| 1971-72 | 89                               |

Obviously the fodder-crops raised on such a small area cannot suffice for as large a number of cattle as the district contains. The traditional method of procuring fodder for the cattle is to make that out of such lands as the culturable waste, permanent pastures and other grazing lands, current fallows and other fallow lands. The total area (in hectares) of these categories of land from 1968-69 to 1971-72 is given below.

|         |        |
|---------|--------|
| 1968-69 | 54,298 |
| 1969-70 | 53,549 |
| 1970-71 | 53,365 |
| 1971-72 | 53,248 |

Another ingredient that goes to make fodder is the straw and stalks of crops like wheat, barley, gram, paddy, maize, etc. During the winter the cattle are fed with paddy straw which is believed to have heating qualities and which keeps the cattle warm. It is, however, difficult to preserve the straw for a longer time, and therefore, efforts are made to get it consumed as quickly as possible. It is also believed that in summer it does not suit the cattle and cause illness. This source of fodder is only available in

paddy-growing areas. Side by side with the paddy straw, stalks of maize are also used as fodder. Agriculturists now serve these stalks duly cut into small pieces as most of the farmers have installed chaff-cutting machines. Almost every piece of pasture under the individual ownership is carefully fenced generally with thorny bushes and rarely with low stone-walls so that no stray cattle may enter and spoil the crops. In this way the grass is allowed to grow for hay. During the month of October when the harvesting of crop is over and sometimes even earlier to that operation, the grass so preserved is cut and collected. The common grass-lands too, wherever they exist, are left ungrazed by mutual agreement by the local inhabitants during the pasture season and in the autumn all the villagers stow the hay. During and after the autumn it is a common sight to find ricks of hay dotted here and there near the villages. Many trees are also seen laden with hay, hung in their forks, during the rainy season when the grass is green and wet and susceptible to rotting if heaped in the form of a rick. By hanging it on the trees the water drops out and free circulation of air and exposure to sun dries it up and it is well preserved for use during the winter.

In addition to cultivated grasses, straw and stalks of crops, and naturally grown grass, is the source comprising leaves and foliage of various trees carefully preserved in the holdings of the cultivators. Most notable of these trees are the *biul* (*Grewia oppositifolia*), the *kharak* (*Cettis australis*), the *krail* (*Bauhinia variegata*) and the *sanan* (*Ougeinia dalbergioides*) out of which, generally one and occasionally two loppings are taken. Foliage of certain other trees growing occasionally on the holdings of the cultivators and generally in the forests is also served as fodder.

**Live-stock :** The domestic animals are the "main source, of power for tillage and transport, of precious quality of manure, invaluable human food in the form of flesh as well as numerous other animal products, and, lastly of fleece, skins, hides and bones etc. It is, therefore, no wonder that the inhabitants of this district, like elsewhere in Himachal Pradesh attach not only a great importance to their live-stock but also a high sense of sanctity. On the live-stock depend their own lives. Hence a large number of live-stock is reared even though they are almost unconscious of the economic disadvantages that entails out of their ignorance regarding economic and scientific method of animal husbandry. The succeeding table denotes the number of live-stock, tahsil-wise as ascertained during the regular quinquennial censuses of 1961 and 1966.

| Particulars          | Tahsils              |                    |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| <i>A. Live-stock</i> | <i>Bilaspur Sadr</i> | <i>Ghamarwin</i>   | Total                |
| Cattle               | 30,822<br>24,281     | 26,211<br>33,111   | 57,033<br>57,392     |
| Buffaloes            | 25,262<br>18,065     | 25,291<br>35,396   | 50,553<br>53,461     |
| Horses and ponies    | 61<br>106            | 68<br>40           | 129<br>146           |
| Donkeys              | 18<br>56             | 1<br>13            | 19<br>69             |
| Mules                | 77<br>70             | 93<br>95           | 170<br>165           |
| Sheep                | 8,241<br>7,873       | 13,887<br>17,638   | 22,128<br>25,511     |
| Goats                | 20,346<br>18,336     | 11,690<br>15,396   | 32,036<br>33,732     |
| Camels               | 38<br>23             | —<br>—             | 38<br>23             |
| Others               | —<br>43              | 2<br>1             | 2<br>44              |
| Total live-stock     | 84,865<br>68,853     | 77,243<br>1,01,690 | 1,62,108<br>1,70,543 |
| B. Poultry           | 3,094<br>4,175       | 4,057<br>5,983     | 7,151<br>10,158      |
| Total A & B          | 87,959<br>73,028     | 81,300<br>1,07,673 | 1,69,259<br>1,80,701 |

The above statistical position reveals an overall decrease in the number of agricultural stock with the exception of buffaloes and camels registering almost insignificant increase. The decreasing trend is more pronounced and remarkable in the case of goats, a species that has come up for a severe and general criticism on account of its being a highly destructible animal for forest growth and responsible for causing, or at least creating situations favourable for, erosion of the lands. The future does not, therefore, seem to be bright or even favourable for the poor goats. Whether the decreasing trend of the number of the agricultural stock is due to a conscious drive towards limiting the number of live-stock, on the part of the agriculturist or whether it is as a result of better or more accurate enumeration by the concerned departments, cannot definitely be said but in any case it augurs well with the changing times when animal husbandry is assuming more and more importance.

**Cattle :** The district possesses an indigenous breed of cattle, which differs considerably from the ordinary hill kind. The animals are slightly larger, the heads and horns are coarser, and the face longer. The ear assumes a more depending position, and the hump, although small, is more developed than in the common *pahari* breed. Labanas use these beasts a great deal for carrying salt and other goods or commodities. The cows give from two to three litres of milk, and the price of a full-grown animal of either sex once used to be rupees ten to rupees twenty-five, but now a cow costs three hundred rupees or more and an ox much more.

**Buffalo :** The last cattle census of 1966, as regard the buffaloes, has registered an increase in their number over that of 1961. The increase in the number of buffaloes is attributable to the increased demand of milk, ghee and other milk products. Buffaloes are numerous and of good stumps. There is one buffalo after every three persons of the population. The buffaloes are of good breed and often people from the plains buy them. Generally Gujjars keep buffaloes in large number and sell their milk and ghee.

**Sheep breeding :** The people are fond of rearing sheep for manure and wool purposes. The statistics as revealed in the last cattle census of 1966, has registered increase over that of 1961.

**Goats :** As in the case of sheep so also in respect of goats, there has been a considerable increase in their number in the cattle census of 1966 as compared with that of 1961. Goat is useful for its suitability as a pack animal on paths on which larger beasts of burden cannot be used, and also because of its flesh and hair. In the former days more people supplemented their income by keeping goats.

**Horses, ponies, mules and donkeys :** The people do not seem to have shown much interest in keeping these species of live-stock. With the

advancement in the means of communication the future of these species does not seem to be favourable. The figures of the last cattle census of 1966 have, however, shown a slight increase in the number of these species.

**Poultry farming :** In the rural areas poultry can constitute the richest and the cheapest and the most handy diet for otherwise ill-nourished and under-nourished people. It is easy for every cultivator to rear a small pen of poultry birds. But from that the cultivators have not yet fully recognised poultry as a part of the diet.

**Organisational set up :** To provide veterinary facilities to the people for cattle breeding, the Animal Husbandry Department is running as many as six veterinary hospitals located at Bilaspur, Jukhala, Ghamarwin, Bassi, Dushlera and Barthin and seven veterinary dispensaries at Chhakon, Jhandutta, Kakrana, Kalol, Kaphara, Hatwar and Bharari and two check-posts under Rinderpest Eradication Scheme at Swarghat and Toba. In these check-posts, established under the Rinderpest Eradication Scheme, migratory animals suffering from contagious diseases are isolated and treated and prophylactic vaccination is given against rinderpest and other contagious diseases including African Horse Sickness, and flocks of sheep and goats are also dewormed against *endo*, a parasitic infestation. There are also three veterinary outlying dispensaries at Bharoli-Kalan, Chelali and Merhana and fourteen artificial insemination sub-centres at Bilaspur, Kothipura, Bogibanola, Beri, Chandpur, Delag, Begher, Barsandh, Barthin, Dadhol, Kothi, Kuthera, Kagathana and Ghamarwin. To look after the smooth running of the veterinary hospitals and dispensaries there is a District Animal Husbandry Officer with his headquarters at Bilaspur. Each veterinary hospital has been provided with a Veterinary Assistant Surgeon, a Veterinary Compounder and a Stock Assistant to look after the field work. Each veterinary dispensary is looked after by a Stock Assistant assisted by other employees.

### Measures to improve the quality of breeds and to secure greater output

Under the Key Village Scheme, sponsored by the Government of India, the Veterinary Department has set up eight Key Village Centres.

For improving the breed of the cattle a Live-stock Farm was started at Kothipura on September 15, 1958. Suitable breed of goat was evolved by cross breeding the white Himalayan goat with the angora bucks. During 1966-67, Bull Rearing Scheme was also started at this farm with a view to augment the number of cross-bred cow bulls in the Pradesh. Steps have been taken to produce fodder and grasses of improved varieties, harvesting the existing green grasses in the pastures at proper time and to provide baled grass to the live-stock maintained at the farm and by the private breeders.

The cattle population in the district stood at 1.3 lakhs according to the 1951 live-stock census and increased to 1.7 lakhs in 1966. Thus the development of animal husbandry has assumed an added significance towards a sound system of diversified agriculture which affects the economy of the district. Under the Key Village Scheme available at Veterinary Institutions and Key Village Units, cows are artificially inseminated.

### **Animal diseases and remedial or preventive measures**

In the past it appears, no attention was at all paid towards the preservation of cattle wealth. Obviously therefore, a heavy toll of animal life must have been claimed by deadly diseases. With the merger of State, however, things took a sharp turn towards the better. In the erstwhile Bilaspur State certain veterinary hospitals/dispensaries came to be established such as those located at Bilaspur, Ghamarwin, Jukhala, Barthin, Dushlera and Bharari. All of these institutions, at the time of integration of Bilaspur with the Himachal Pradesh, in 1954, were inherited by the Himachal Pradesh Animal Husbandry Department which have since then made considerable progress and continue to do so. The number of veterinary hospitals, dispensaries and check-posts added to the aforesaid six veterinary institutions has already been mentioned. The common cattle diseases found in the district are described below.

Of the common animal diseases found in the district are the foot and mouth disease, generally imported from the plains through the cattle brought for sale. Since 1941 specific quarantine measures were taken against their sudden appearance in the area. These diseases now have almost been controlled.

Out of the contagious diseases rinderpest is the most important, responsible for seventy to eighty per cent mortality among the live-stock. It causes death in large number and reduces considerably the vitality, productive capacity and working efficiency of the live-stock. To eradicate this deadly disease the Himachal Pradesh Government started, in 1957, a Rinderpest Eradication Scheme. Its contagion is generally brought from the adjoining plains of the Punjab, therefore, the scheme was initiated first in the Bilaspur district being contiguous to the plains.

By way of general measures the Veterinary Department provides necessary medical aid to the ailing animals. Preventive vaccination against haemorrhagic septicaemia was being carried out, mange dressing being applied, antiseptic mouth-wash and antiseptic foot-bath given for treatment of foot and mouth disease, anthelmintics were administered against *endo* parasites and live-stock dipped against *ecto* parasitic infestation. Prophylactic vaccination is being done to control anthrax, haemorrhagic septicaemia and

rabies. Free treatment is given to all ailing live-stock in the government veterinary hospitals and dispensaries. In the case of any outbreak of contagious disease in any area within or adjoining the district, free vaccination is administered by the touring staff, on priority basis.

## FISHERIES

In this district, as elsewhere, fisheries can serve a two-fold purpose, providing more protein to the largely protein deficit diet of the average citizen, and making the optimum use of existing potential water resources. The district has a net-work of rivers and streams, which is one of the most essential aspects of the fishery development. In the past, before the merger of State, most of its waters of fisheries importance were the privilege of only the nobles and rulers. There were no fisheries rules or regulations to conserve the fisheries wealth and the exploitation was limited to certain individuals. After the State having been declared as the Chief Commissioner's Province, the Fisheries Department was organised in the end of 1952, with a skeleton staff of one Assistant Warden of Fisheries, one Fisheries Mukaddam and a peon. The Fisheries Department took measures to conserve the fisheries wealth. The *Indian Fisheries Act, 1897* and the *Punjab Fisheries Act, 11, 1914* were extended to this State and rules were framed to stop indiscriminate killing of fish and their juveniles. The fishing was allowed only under a license and thus the waters which were once the privilege of the few were opened for exploitation by all. In 1967, the Fisheries Department was organised as a separate department under the Director of Fisheries.

### Riverine fisheries

The river Satluj and other streams that flow through this district, have vast potentialities for the development and exploitation of its riverine fisheries. These rivers and streams are rich in fish fauna. The most important of these are *Tor pituita* (Mahsir), *Sehize-thorase plaqiستمus* (Gungli or saloh), Himalayan Barbel, *Labeo dero* (Gid) and other minor *labeo* species. Mahsir is famous for its game value and is highly prized by anglers among the local fish. *Labeo* species form the main fisheries and is abundantly found in river Satluj. Important fishing grounds along the Satluj exist at Dehar, Aur, Berighat, Serimatla and Gah and on Sir khad at Bam, Matial, Dabhla, Ghamarwin, Sunhani, Baghla and Balghar. Fishing is done in all seasons. There is at present no area declared as sanctuary but steps are under way to declare a few breeding areas along Sir, Ali and Ghamber khads as sanctuaries.

### Reservoir fisheries

With the completion of Bhakra Dam across river Satluj the fishing potential of Bilaspur district has completely changed. A vast reservoir

namely Gobind Sagar has been formed, spread over an area of 169 square kilometres which has opened new vistas for development of commercial fishery in this region. The reservoir has both the endemic fish population consisting of *Labeo dero* (Gid), *Tor pitulora* (Mahsir) and *Mystus seenghala* (Singhara) as well introduced fish population of Mirror Carp and allied varieties (*Cyprinus Carpio*), *Thiela* (Catla Catla), *Labeo rehita* (Rohu) and *Cirrhina mrigala* (Mrigal).

The creation of fish population of Mirror Carp and other introduced fish species has been largely due to developmental efforts of the Fisheries Department for which a large scale fish hatchery was established at village Deoli in Bilaspur district during the year 1961-62. A brief description of this farm appears later in this chapter. From this source, up to 1972-73, 72.1 lac of Mirror Carp fingerlings have been stocked in the Gobind Sagar Reservoir.

The fishing is also no longer confined to individual effort of a fisherman with a cast net as in the past but has acquired collective efforts of a community with modern methods of fishing. At present over 250 fishermen are employed in fishing industry who are landing between 300 to 400 tonnes of fish annually valued between rupees three and four lacs. The maximum optimum yield is likely to go up to 1,100 tonnes of fish annually in due course of time.

### **Pond fisheries**

As regards the pond culture, it has a limited scope due to non-availability of suitable ponds in the district. Mirror Carp, a known fish for its cultural propensity, has been introduced at selected places under the guidance of Fisheries Department. The efforts are underway to extend fish culture activities to all suitable waters available in this district.

The farm at Deoli consists of two big breeding tanks and a battery of fourteen nursery ponds. The farm has already produced over 80 lacs of Mirror Carp fingerlings, majority of which was utilised for stocking of Gobind Sagar and the rest for stocking of other impounded waters in the Pradesh.

A second unit of Mirror Carp farm of a similar capacity is being established on *Alsed khad* near village Dehar in Mandi district wherefrom also Mirror Carp fingerlings will be released into the Gobind Sagar.

Fishing is allowed only under a license which can be had for a year, a month or a week. There is size restriction on killing important species of fish such as *Mahsir*, Himalayan Barbel, *Catla*, *Rohu*, *Mrigal* and *Singhara*.



The use of dynamite or other explosive for killing of fish is prohibited as also the use of poison. There is also restriction on the size of mesh of nets, which varies from net to net. Erection of dam or diversion of water for the purpose of killing fish is also prohibited. The fishing is mostly done by means of nets, long lines with hooks and rod and line. In the reservoir, fishing is mostly done with gill nets, for the operation of which boat is an essential equipment. At present about 200 to 250 boats are in use for fishing purposes. In addition to this, mechanized boats propelled by 5 H.P. diesel engine and measuring 6 to 10 metres in length are being used for transportation of catches from the interior of reservoir to fish marketing centres. The important fish markets in the reservoir area are located at Bilaspur and Bhakra. With the increased landing of fish from Gobind Sagar Reservoir, the need of marketing has increased manifold. The fishermen individually or collectively sell their catches to wholesalers either at Bilaspur or Bhakra who in turn send fish, packed in ice, to other markets either located within the Pradesh at Mandi, Kulu, Simla, Dharamsala and Palampur or to distant markets of Chandigarh, Delhi, Dehra Dun etc. Now two primary co-operative societies of these fishermen have also been organised in the district and these are collecting fish from individual fishermen and selling further to wholesalers on tender basis.

The fishermen mostly belong to community of Jhinwars and Daulas but now Muslims and high caste Hindus have also taken up the profession of fishing in reservoir area. They have also other subsidiary means of livelihood such as cultivation and water-mills. There are over three hundred registered fishermen on the roll of the department, who have taken up fishing as sole subsidiary profession.

As regards the administrative set up, the department in this district is organised as a division under an Assistant Director of Fisheries, whose headquarter is located at Bilaspur. He has under his control three Fisheries Officers with their headquarters at Deoli, Bilaspur and Zakatkhana. The Fishery Officers are assisted in their work by a team of junior staff.

## **FORESTRY**

### **Importance of forestry in the economy of the district**

Next to agriculture, forests are the most important source of wealth of a tract and, as usual, play a vital role in the economy of the people. The forests of the district are neither very rich nor very extensive. In the year 1975 about 42 per cent of the area was under forests, contributing a good income to the total State income from forests.

### **Brief history of the past forest management**

The history of previous forest management may be divided into three

distinct periods. The period before 1900, from 1900 to 1932 and from 1932 onwards.

When the Bilaspur State was founded in about the eighth century the State policy was to clear the forests rather than to conserve them, for providing room to the invader-settlers. Policy of clearing of forests continued to be pursued, for a long time.

No reliable record is available of the previous history of the forests. However, from very old times the ownership of all land vested in the raja and every right was supposed to come from him. The raja, as owner, used to take a substantial share of the produce of the cultivated lands, and also used to charge *nazarana* on the breaking up of the new lands for cultivation.

With the development in the construction of public buildings and the communications which started in the Punjab in the middle of the last century, the dearth of good timber was felt and the necessary search for it started. This led to forest conservancy in Punjab hills and the first set of forest conservancy rules for the hill districts of the Punjab was sanctioned in 1855. Demands of fuel and timber were on the increase and the supplies were gradually on the decrease. Because of the increased demand for wood the ruling chiefs of Simla Hill States began to lease their forests indiscriminately. At that time administrative policy of the Punjab Government was that it would be highly objectionable and improper to exercise a direct interference with the chiefs in the management and conservation of their forests which it was considered they had a right to dispose of as they thought fit. Gradually this administrative policy was modified later on and in 1872 a direction was issued by the then Superintendent, Simla Hill States (Mr. Macnab), to the ruling chiefs to manage their forests properly and Bilaspur was also one of them. This was the result of the expert advice rendered by Dr. Falconer in 1850 and Dr. Cleghorn in 1863.

From 1872 to 1887 much was done. Previous to that there were only *Rakhas*. They were responsible for the giving of trees to the zamindars for their requirements and charged from them fixed fees, four annas per permit for trees and two annas per permit for bamboos. They were also entitled to four *seers* of corn annually per house from the zamindars, and received no pay. In return they were required to pay *nazar* of one rupee, *lag wazir* of eight annas and *mamla* of twenty to sixty rupees per year. After every three years they had to pay *bhet* of fifty rupees to seventy rupees and received a *pagri* as honorarium. These *Rakhas* were charged with the protection of forests which consisted in the prevention of new cultivation and felling of building timber, bamboos and fire-wood without permission. The cutting of trees were sold once about the year 1880. Except this there is no record of any exploitation of the forests by the traders.

During the reign of Raja Amar Chand, in 1888, a separate Forest Department was organised under the Forest Ranger and some Forest Guards were appointed in addition to *Rakhas*. After 1888 the Forest Department was made separate and Forest Ranger was appointed to control it. The first survey and demarcation of the forests was made in 1889, but its maps were lost. The last regular working plan for the management of the forests of Bilaspur district for a period of twenty years from 1954 to 1974 was drawn and came into force on April 1, 1954 and a complete set of maps was also prepared.

In 1888 when it was found that the hill chiefs were not evincing necessary interest in the matter of management of forests despite directions from the Superintendent, Simla Hill States, a special committee was constituted consisting of the Commissioner, Delhi Division, the Superintendent, Simla Hill States and the Forest Officer, Simla Division, for future forests management. This committee, in consultation with the State officials and approval by the chiefs framed the following rules.

- (i) All State forests be divided into three classes ;
  - (a) Reserved forests (*mahfuza*) free of all rights, such forests were demarcated by boundary pillars.
  - (b) Protected forests (*mahduda*) in which right—holders had certain specified rights. Forests were demarcated by boundary pillars.
  - (c) Village forests (*dehatri*) which comprised the entire *banjar* area in which trees were growing or were likely to grow, but in which all the rights of user of the right-holders were preserved.
- (ii) The demarcation of the boundaries of the reserved and protected forests and the settlement of the rights were entrusted to the State. The work was to be carried out with the advice and under the guidance of the Divisional Forest Officer. Grazing by Gujjars, setting fire to the forests and cutting and lopping of trees were prohibited.

To put these rules into practice, a list of forests, to be treated as reserves, was supplied by the State to the Superintendent, Simla Hill States. The raja being minor the then Council of Administration of Bilaspur invited Pt. Sunder Lal of Patiala who though carried out the demarcation and survey of a few forests, yet never submitted papers to the Council of Regency. Munshi Harnam Singh was then appointed as a Ranger who left the State in 1890 without any progress whatever. The Superintendent

Simla Hill States, during the same year again informed the Council of Regency that in pursuance of the orders by the Punjab Government certain acts should be prohibited in the demarcated forests such as (i) no new cultivation should be made, (ii) grazing by Gujjars and residents of other States should be prohibited, and (iii) felling by contractors should not be made without the consent of the Superintendent, Simla Hill States.

A set of forest rules was also forwarded for adoption or to draw up a similar set of rules. In a reply, dated May 3, 1891, the Council conveyed its general acceptance of the set of rules.

The first working plan of these forests was prepared by E. M. Conbatry in 1900. The plan was made for a period of ten years after which a revision was suggested. The total area of forests according to this plan was 23,348 acres. The eighty *godams* (grass reserves) of Dhar Kot were excluded from it, and only 21,549 acres were brought under the working plan. These forests were divided into seventy-six compartments and were allotted to four working circles.

The final forest settlement was made in 1912 by Mian Durga Singh which is the basis of the rights of users at present. The first working plan by Mr. E.M. Conbatry was for a period of ten years. It was, however not acted upon. From 1910 to 1921 the forests were worked under annual plans of operations prepared by the Divisional Forest Officer, Simla. Subsequently owing to constitutional changes in the relationship of the State and the Government of India, the control of the Divisional Forest Officer, Simla, came to an end and the State was left to manage its forests independently. All fellings except for the removal of dead and dying trees were stopped in the forests till 1932 when the working plan was revised and sanctioned by the erstwhile State Government after a proper scrutiny by the Chief Conservator of Forest, Punjab. This plan was for nineteen years ending in 1951.

| Working circles               | Area in acres      |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. <i>Chil</i> working circle | 6,441              |
| 2. Fuel working circle        | 7,501              |
| 3. Bamboo working circle      | 7,312              |
| 4. Oak working circle         | 295                |
| Total :                       | <hr/> 21,549 <hr/> |

*Chil* working circle : All hill forests were included in it and *chil* trees were enumerated. These forests contained mostly poles and the crop was

dense in parts. The large trees, generally malformed, were scattered all over. The method of treatment prescribed was thinnings on a five year rotation and removal of badly grown trees interfering with the growth of good trees. Bush-cutting and sowing of *chil* seed were also prescribed. The practice of lopping *chil* trees and other valuable trees was stopped. Certain areas were proposed for closure for a period of five to ten years.

**Fuel working circle :** All the scrub forests were included in it, but fellings were proposed over a small area only i.e. about five hundred and seventy-five acres in Ghaniri, sixty acres in Malyawar and one hundred acres in Naina Devi forests. Over the rest of this circle the fellings were left at the discretion of the Forest Officer as and when the demand arose. The rotation was fixed at twenty years, the number of standards to be kept at twenty trees. The yield of fuel was estimated at two hundred maunds per acre. *Thohar* cutting was prescribed in the coppice felled forests. Certain areas were proposed for closure in this circle in addition to coppice crop. The period of closure was five to ten years.

**Babmoo working circle :** All the areas containing bamboos were included in it. The cutting cycle was fixed at two years, and each forest was divided into two parts to be worked in alternate years. An annual yield of one lac of bamboos was estimated for export.

**Oak working circle :** The Bahadurpur forest was the only oak forest in the State. Thinnings on a rotation of ten years and selection fellings for the removal of big trees were prescribed. Planting of deodar and sowing of *ban* were also prescribed.

In 1911 the exploitation of the *chil* forests was under-taken. From 1911 to 1921 the Divisional Forest Officer, Simla, prepared the annual plans of operations and the works were carried out according to that. Under this plan the *chil* forests were thinned on a five year cycle and coppice felling was also started in Malyawar forest. Thinnings were done in the Bahadurpur forest and bamboos were exploited from Naina Devi and Bagphal forests. Settlement was made and the rights were finally settled. During this period about 1,39,857 green *chil* trees were removed in thinnings.

In 1903 when the Land Revenue Settlement commenced, measurement of the demarcated forests was also taken up. During the Forest Settlement of 1912 no new survey of the forests was done, only the maps of the Revenue Settlement were taken as basis, and adjustments made in them. Though a complete new set of forest maps was then made but no corrections were made in the revenue papers, and eventually encroachments in the demarcated forests continued. During the revised Land Revenue Settlement of 1931

and 1932 special care was exercised to survey the demarcated forests correctly and separately unlike the previous occasion when many of them were measured and included in various villages. This resulted in accurate set of maps. Many changes had taken place also due to encroachments, in the demarcated forests made after the Forest Settlement of 1912 till the revised Land Revenue Settlement of 1931. Much of the time was spent in the demarcation and survey of the forest and very little attention was paid to the management and improvement of the forest growth. Exploitation of the bamboos and fuel-wood through contractors was started from Naina Devi forest (bamboos 15,000 and fuel-wood 5,000 maunds annually). The fee for forests produce to be charged from the zamindars was also fixed.

There was no regular scheme of working in force. Gaddi grazing was common. All the forests were open to grazing. The lopping of *chil* trees for charcoal was very common. The trees to be felled were marked by the Range Officer and the lists prepared out of which the grants were made. This system continued till the Forest Settlement in 1912 when all the *Rakhas* were replaced by paid Forest Guards.

#### **Commutation of forests cess from corn into cash**

The forest cess of four *seers* of corn per house was changed into cash (four annas i.e. 25 P. per family) and was remitted into Government Treasury. Forest cess was abolished by the ruler of the State after he assumed powers in 1933.

Under the new working plan forests were constituted into fifteen blocks, divided further into compartments, numbering one hundred and eighteen, and on a total area of 31,133 acres, made up of the *ban* working circle measuring two hundred and eighty-five acres, the *chil* working circle measuring 7808 acres, the bamboo working circle measuring 7919 acres, the fuel working circle measuring 2818 acres and the miscellaneous working circle measuring 12303 acres.

**The *ban* working circle :** The method of treatment prescribed was to convert the *ban* forest into deodar forest and to encourage *ban* and other trees in the portions not suitable for deodar. About fifty acres of *ban* forest were prescribed for planting with deodar seedlings.

**The *chil* working circle ;** The crop being immature, only thinnings on ten year cycle were prescribed. The whole circle was gone over in the thinnings in the first cycle. During the second cycle because of the extension of resin tapping operations in Gochar, Seru, Rahan, Samoh and part of Jhanjhar forests, they have been thinned. All the forests are under protection against fire and many small fire lines in Rahan, Gochar and Jhanjhar forests have been cleared.

**The bamboo circle :** This included the whole of the Naina Devi Block except compartment No. I, and compartment Bagphal of the Baseh Block, irrespective of the fact whether the areas consisted of bamboos pure or mixed, or miscellaneous forest. To meet the requirements of local inhabitants it was divided into three felling series.

There are two types of forest growth in this working circle, viz., areas in which bamboo predominate and areas in which miscellaneous species predominate or grow to the exclusion of bamboos.

**Kharkary and Bhakra series :** The method of treatment prescribed for these series was the same as prescribed for bamboos in the Mandially felling series. It was also prescribed in the working plan that in case of gregarious flowering, the area should be closed for grazing. Extensive flowering occurred in compartments eight, nine and eleven which were closed to grazing and regeneration came up well. The bamboo forests were successfully protected against fire though no cleanings in the clumps could be done.

**The fuel working circle :** The area of this circle is distributed in three different blocks of miscellaneous forests. This circle was formed to meet the only demand of the erstwhile State. There was no other buyer of fuel. Therefore, the fellings were not regular and continuous. The areas felled were closed to grazing for ten years but closure extended to fifteen years. The results are satisfactory. Due to frequent drought, sowing and planting of miscellaneous trees have not been very successful except for *khair* and *sheesham* in certain places. The density of vegetation improved very much, as compared to the open areas.

**The miscellaneous working circle :** All the remaining demarcated miscellaneous forests containing trees of no commercial value were grouped in this circle with no rigid prescriptions. Whatever prescriptions were made in the working plan, proved impracticable and unworkable in this circle. Sowings and plantings were done successfully on a minor scale in Bhiaoo and Sadyar compartments which are under closures for the last about twenty years.

### **Fire protection**

Fire protection has much improved inasmuch as the number of fire-watchers has increased from four to ten, fire lines, about thirty-eight kilometres in length, have been cleared, and in the areas adjoining the Hamirpur tahsil, departmental burnings are done every third year.

### **Sowing and planting**

A good plantation of deodar has been raised in Bahadurpur forests.

Similarly small plantation of teak, *harar* trees, sal trees and *cho* (*Dendrocalamus hamiltoni*) have been raised in various forests. Some sowings of *chil* were made in blank areas of Samoh and Gochar forests and sowing and planting of miscellaneous trees, especially *khair*, were done in closed areas of Bhiaoo, Sadyar, Goen, Bankharu, Osal Jaman and Khawa.

### Survey and demarcation

During the revised Land Revenue Settlement 1933, all the forests have been remeasured as separate village units and maps have been prepared for them. Arrangements are also being made with the Survey of India for the survey of these forests on 4"-1 mile scale. Pillars have been constructed in Jhanjhar, Samoh and Seru-Siasi forests. Cutcha pillars have been erected on the boundaries of all these forests.

The working plan compiled and introduced in 1932 was sanctioned for a period of nineteen years and was to come to an end in 1951. The next working plan was drawn up for a period of twenty years and came into force on first April, 1954. As the entire area of the district forms the catchment of the Gobind Sagar and erosion of land is a problem here, the policy of future management of forests has been formulated mainly and substantially to ensure as much prevention of erosion and thereby as much protection of the Gobind Sagar as is possible. This consideration forms the first and foremost object of the forest management. It aims to preserve and improve the forest-cover on the hill sides to ensure soil conservation and protection from silting of the Bhakra Dam Reservoir. The demarcated forests form a very small percentage of the total land area of the district and, therefore, every acre of these forests will be dominated by this consideration, under whatever system of management that may be treated. The people depend on these forests for most of their requirements of fuel, timber, grass and grazing. But the population being dense the forest area being small, it is difficult to meet these requirements in their entirety.

The *chil* forests are proposed to be managed under a shelter wood system. The mode of regeneration will be natural by uniform opening of the crop, by successive removal of trees, supplemented, where necessary, with artificial reproduction when and where necessary for the completion of the regeneration, within a specified period. The bamboo forests are to be managed on a quadriennial felling cycle as in the past, but the removal of the bamboos will be regulated by revised felling rules. The scrub forests, which can be exploited, will be managed on the coppice with standard system and others under selection-cum-protection system. The *khair* trees in the bamboo and scrub forests will be managed under special regulation in view of their special economic value. The small plot of *ban* trees will be converted into a deodar plantation as far as practicable.



For future management five working circles have been formed viz. the *Chil* Working Circle consisting of all the *chil* forests in the State, the Bamboo Working Circle embracing all commercially important bamboo bearing areas, the Fuel Working Circle comprising the scrub forests which can be exploited for fuel-wood, the Protection Working Circle consisting of the remaining scrub forests and the poor scrub *chil* areas and the *Ban* Working Circle consisting of only one small forest containing *ban* trees at Bahadurpur.

#### Forest produce

In a densely populated agricultural tract like Bilaspur with small percentage of forests, the possibilities of marketable surplus forest produce are obviously limited because most of the timber, fuel and grass are required for local consumption. The difficulties and dearth of transport and communications, in the past, had a retarding effect on the development of new resources. But the recent development in transport facilities give impetus to the exploitation of some more forest products. The principal marketable forest products include timber, bamboos, resin, *katha*, charcoal, fuel-wood, *bhabhar* grass, fodder grass and other minor produce. Each product deserves a brief notice.

**Timber:** *Chil* is the only tree fit for timber; the other broad leaved species being of poor quality not yielding good timber in marketable quantities. A sizeable part of *chil* timber is consumed locally, except in two blocks, namely Gochar and Fatehpur, where right-holders, demand is less and timber is available for export. It is exported, in the shape of sleepers and *ballis* to Doraha via Rupar, generally by floating down the various streams and the Satluj river. Up to the sight of launching, on the banks of the river the timber is carried down by men. There is a fairly large demand for building timber from the forests, especially in parganas Ajmerpur, Tiun, Sariun, Gherwin, Sunhani, Sadr and Bahadurpur.

**Bamboos:** The local demand for bamboos is not very heavy and thus there is enough surplus for export. The lack of adequate means of transport and age old prejudice against the bamboos being transported through the river are still stumbling blocks, for their exploitation. Also there is but no enough water in the tributaries of the Satluj to facilitate floating of the bamboos. Therefore they are carried to the river banks for floating down up to Rupar. Some bamboos, from the western part of the Naina Devi and Ghaniri forests, are also transported by motor-trucks to Rupar. At Rupar, bamboos are straightened, cut into marketable lengths, graded into trade classes and then exported to other towns of the Punjab. Besides Rupar, similar markets are developing at Anandpur Sahib and Nangal Township also. Some inferior bamboos are sold on the way also.

**Resin:** The question of resin tapping, during the princely regime, remained under consideration for years together. Owing to slump in the market and other organisational difficulties nothing could be done till when a

modest beginning was made through a contractor. The work was resumed in 1940 but many difficulties had to be faced, though some of them were got over and the work went on. The local labour for resin-tapping was unavailable and handicapped the execution of the scheme. Efforts to train local labour were made. The total yield during 1940 was about eight thousand maunds. Within five years, the quantity of resin was almost doubled. From 1943 the work was extended to the demarcated forests as well, and in 1952 all the forests, demarcated and un-demarcated, were brought under resin tapping. In 1952-53 the resin was supplied to the Himachal Pradesh Rosin and Turpentine Factory, Nahan, and the auction was held on restricted sale basis. By open auction the total sale price was Rs. 4,20,342. The resin tapping, the main source of income, will continue to be the most profitable industry of the Forest Department. The method of tapping in operation is the light continuous tapping with the exception that the channel is continued for four years instead of five and then a new channel is started from the bottom of the tree. This is according to the practice prevailing in the adjoining forests of Hamirpur Range and also because of the reluctance of the contractors to tap the same channel for the fifth year.

The entire resin produced in the area used to be exported to Hoshiarpur and later after 1952, to the Government Rosin and Turpentine Factory at Nahan. Now there is a Rosin and Turpentine Factory in Bilaspur itself and the resin produced in the area is suitably consumed in this factory.

**Katha :** Extracted from *Acacia catechu* trees, this has been an important source of forest income. In the Government forests the trees are generally not available silviculturally and therefore, trees available on private lands are felled and *katha* is extracted and exported.

**Charcoal :** Charcoal is not produced in significant quantities. Previously whatever charcoal was burnt, used to be consumed locally and also at the Bilaspur town though now it is exported to Rupar and Nangal Township also. The charcoal of *chil* is valued and used much by the goldsmiths.

**Fuel-wood :** Fuel-wood is generally consumed locally by each household. The demand for fuel-wood has increased in the Bilaspur town and also at Bhakra, Nangal, Anandpur Sahib and Kiratpur.

**Bhabhar grass :** Exploited only from the undemarcated forests lying on the western side of Dhar Naina Devi it is used locally for making ropes, rafting timber and thatching. In the demarcated forests it does not grow in exploitable quantities. Its notable market is Yamunanagar (Haryana) where it is used for paper making.

**Other minor products**

Gum from *Odina woodier* is extracted by the contractors and is exported to Amritsar. The leaves of *baubinia vahlii* alongwith fruits of *amla* and *amaltass* are also sold by auction.

The income from timber and fuel-wood from the year 1964-65 to 1972-73 is given below.

| Year    | Timber | Fuel-wood | Total  |
|---------|--------|-----------|--------|
| 1964-65 | 213810 | 2462      | 24272  |
| 1965-66 | 151819 | 9223      | 161042 |
| 1966-67 | 175315 | 13783     | 179098 |
| 1967-68 | 165672 | 13793     | 178465 |
| 1968-69 | 200950 | 28127     | 229077 |
| 1969-70 | 186656 | 88101     | 274757 |
| 1970-71 | 237220 | 6157      | 248377 |
| 1971-72 | 147600 | 13846     | 158446 |
| 1972-73 | 327905 | 16556     | 334461 |

The income from resin, bamboos, fodder grass, *bhabhar* grass, stone *bajri* and *harar* for the nine years from 1964-65 to 1972-73 is given below.

| Year    | Total income in rupees |
|---------|------------------------|
| 1964-65 | 8,80,458               |
| 1965-66 | 8,99,078               |
| 1966-67 | 8,66,449               |
| 1967-68 | 5,96,699               |
| 1968-69 | 8,76,597               |
| 1969-70 | 9,40,100               |
| 1970-71 | 7,76,878               |
| 1971-72 | 8,40,000               |
| 1972-73 | 11,40,000              |

Resin is of the greatest economic importance. From the crude resin, rosin, turpentine, varnish, phinyle etc. are manufactured. *Bhabhar* grass is being used for making paper pulp. Fodder grass is only used locally but is

a very important forest product on which depends the very economy of the local population. Bamboos, sand stone and *bajri* are used locally for construction.

### State assistance to agriculture

To improve the economic condition and thus to raise their standard of living the agriculturists are given liberal *taccavi* loans and other subsidies to increase areas under horticulture, to improve their holdings, to purchase bullocks and seeds, to terrace the fields, to purchase fertilizers and agricultural implements and to construct irrigation channels and drinking water supply schemes, through the Revenue, Agriculture and Development Departments. Loans for the construction of houses usually subservient to agriculturist on long term basis, repayable over a period of thirty years, are also given. Subsidy for construction of houses is also given to Harijans. Since 1956 the following assistance in cash has been given to the agriculturists of the district.

|  |               |
|--|---------------|
| (i) Loans to flood and fire sufferers            | Rs. 43,300    |
| (ii) Loans for improvement of land               | Rs. 2,07,100  |
| (iii) Horticultural loans                        | Rs. 1,01,650  |
| (iv) Loan under low income group housing scheme. |               |
| I. Oustees                                       | Rs. 22,30,050 |
| II. Non-oustees                                  | Rs. 3,56,450  |

Notwithstanding the existence of the Satluj river and numerous small, medium and large streams, all over the district, the floods do not have a calamitous and devastating effects to the extent they generally have in the plains. Due to the hilly nature of the terrain the courses of river and streams are so confined by more or less ridgy and precipitous banks that any degree of increase in the volume of water cannot result in over-flowing the banks. Wherever the flat and low-lying banks are under cultivation, the floods, no doubt, wash away the crops and even the fields but the loss and damage, on the whole, is not of great significance. The floods, generally occurring during the rainy season, are responsible for another kind of damage which may not be of great magnitude at once but assume large proportions by annual recurring. Wherever the banks of the river or streams are not rocky the increased volume of water, during the floods, erode the clayey banks eating deeper and deeper into the soils so that huge land slides start to occur and set in the pernicious process of erosion. These occurrences, sometimes, bring down sizeable chunks of cultivated lands and thus cause irreparable loss to the soil and the human beings. The effect of these minor,

though recurring floods, on the agricultural community and rural life is but not great. Some toll of human as well as animal life is also claimed by these flooded river and streams every year.

In the year 1762 there occurred an unusually great flood in the Satluj not due to the usual cause of heavy rains but owing to a great land slide which choked the river completely for about forty two days near Seoni the capital of erstwhile State of Bhajji. When the temporary dam burst under the weight of accumulated water the river was in spate and the entire town of Bilaspur was completely devastated though no loss of life was sustained as the population had already migrated to safer heights. After this calamity of 1762 this district did not experience floods of such magnitude and intensity causing loss and devastation though the river and streams remain in spate during the rainy season as described already in the preceding paragraph.

### **Famines**

The history or the tradition does not reveal the occurrence of a famine of any mentionable magnitude. It will be natural to assume that local shortages of food and fodder must have occurred in the past due to various usual causes including lack of means of communication, natural calamities and due to mismanagement of agriculture.

### **Droughts**

Like famines the droughts are unknown to the memory of the local people. Complete failure of rains is a thing unknown in these hilly parts. Delayed rains, scanty rains or excessive rains may, sometimes effect the crops and may result in shortage of foodgrains. These shortages are negated, during these days, by import of foodgrains which has been rendered easier by development in the means of transport and communication.

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# **Chapter V**

## **INDUSTRIES**

### **OLD TIME INDUSTRIES**

The district has been and still is more an agricultural tract than an industrial area and the people were, as they still are, entirely dependent on agriculture and naturally their necessities of life are locally met within the villages. The past history of Bilaspur district does not reveal that there had been in existence any industry, in the proper sense of the term, meriting notice. This can be attributed firstly to non-availability of raw materials, non-existence or non-exploitation of mines and minerals and secondly, to the absence of communication and power supply, far off markets, difficult terrain, poverty among the masses and non-enterprising disposition of the people. Thus, broadly speaking, the industrial incentive in Bilaspur district was almost neglected prior to its merger with Himachal Pradesh. However, some cottage industries did exist, mainly to produce essential articles of daily use so as to cater to the local requirements of the people. Among the important village industries that are being worked since time immemorial may be included handloom weaving, leather work, carpentry, basketry, foot-wear, blacksmithy, pottery, gold and silver-smithy, rice husking, oil pressing, milling of grains, mat making and the like.

Some of these industries are now gradually decaying with the passage of time and with the advancement in the various spheres of life. This process of extinction and decadence has been further accelerated by the degeneration of the status of the village artisans. It is common knowledge everywhere that the chamars have started leaving their hereditary profession as they prefer to become ordinary labourers or to work as agriculturists on tiny un-economic holdings, though their own profession offers better prospects. The dead animals which used to be flayed by the chamars are being buried with their skins, thus resulting in wastage of national wealth. The same is true of other village artisans as almost all of them belong to the so called low caste. The decay has further resulted in disturbing the equilibrium of trade as now even such commodities as leather, coarse cloth, agricultural implements etc., which were produced locally, have to be imported.

In none of the cottage industries, it appears, did the local people earn name and fame necessitating up keep of a record. It is also possible that even if there was any special skill or art in these manufactures, the same went on un-noticed by even eminent persons who could have properly

appreciated and immortalised the same. Nevertheless, some items deserve a mention besides what has been stated above regarding other industries.

**Leather work :** In Bilaspur small boxes were made of leather, artistically and neatly embroidered with horse-hair and filaments of pea-cock quills. This kind of work was perhaps, not found elsewhere nearer than Nepal.

**Cotton spinning and handloom weaving :** Weaving, especially on cotton textile was an old art of the area. This industry used to provide a large scale employment on part-time and whole time basis to a good number of weavers, locally known as Julahas. The raw material i.e. cotton was grown locally and the house of a weaver used to be a composite type of unit. The females used to do the spinning work and the males attended to the weaving work and the industry catered to the demand of the local inhabitants. The enquiries reveal that in almost every revenue village there used to be at least a family of weavers making the village self-sufficient in cloth production. The handloom cotton weaving cottage industry could not compete with the mill made and other cloth which started to be imported from outside and thus it, generally speaking, declined. The growth of population also led to the enhanced demand for food crops and cash crops and thus cotton sowing was almost stopped, which also gave great set back to this industry as imported raw material was not economical. Revival and rehabilitation of this industry on any grand scale in the future is a matter very much open to doubt. Though the advent of modern machines reduced the importance of the weavers but as many as six hundred looms were found to have been working by the weavers in their cottages, out of which about two hundred looms were under registration in 1961, as they fall under the purview of cotton textile and are regulated by the *Cotton Textile (Production by handloom) Control Order 1956*. Weavers working on handlooms were reported to be well above five hundred.

**Basketry :** Crude basket making on the traditional technique, for local needs of the cultivators, is going on as before. Many families, engaged in basketry, are scattered over the area. They produce baskets (small and large), *chhakkus* (small and deep baskets), *krandus* (baskets with handles), *berrus* (receptacles for foodgrains), *changors* (seives) and *pankhas* (fans). These wares are quite simple in make without special designs or decorations. The main raw material, namely bamboo, is available locally either from private lands or from the government forests. Their simple and cheap equipment generally consists of two or three cutting knives of different sizes and an axe. Some artisans use only a medium sized knife.

The equipment, service and repair facilities are available from the local artisans. The Banjaras, as the artisans are called, usually supply the

need of local peasants and in turn get customary payments in kind. For example half a kilogram to five kilograms of grains per article is given and the artisan generally is provided with a single meal if he works for a full day in a house. It is rarely that the artisans work in their own houses, with their own raw materials, and put the products on sale in the neighbouring villages on payment, in cash or in kind.

This industry has no doubt received some set back with the introduction of certain plastic products, almost of similar utility and more artistic appearance, yet, the demand in the interior for bamboo products remains largely unaffected. There is a saying current among the local people '*Kanka re-nan, Banje re banan, Indidha Kiya Ba-khan*' (There is no comparison between different kinds of bread made of wheat and of the various articles made of bamboo).

The industry has its peculiar problems. The artisans are very poor unable to think of any improvement in their craft and tools. There is also scarcity of raw material. Forest Department makes available the bamboo sticks at the rate comparatively much cheaper than that the zamindar charges. Thus the artisan has to work for the zamindars in their own houses and with their raw materials. There are no adequate transport facilities. The artisans being scattered cannot avail of the facilities of co-operative system. The Department of Industries is running a basketry-ware centre in Ghamarwin, to provide training in the latest technical know-how to the artisans. The first batch was turned out in April, 1961.

The process of the manufacture of bamboo-wares is quite simple. Long sticks of unflowered bamboo are cut out, from the forests or fields with axe, and dried in the sun for about twelve hours. They are then split up in strips of various shapes and in desired sizes. Generally eight strips are taken to weave a basket to give it a rough shape. Weaving in this case is just to entwine the thinner and smaller strips in the skeleton from bottom upwards to top.

Manufacturing process in respect of a seive is that a small basket is prepared first without a bottom as the bottom is woven separately, with very thin sticks, leaving petty holes. Both the parts are then assembled to make the seive complete. With the submergence of large parts of bamboo-producing areas in the Gobind Sagar, there appear little prospects for improving this industry in the district.

**Pottery :** This is one of the most traditional industries of the district and is practised by the artisans known as Kumhars. The position with regard to the location of these artisans has been that they do not live in groups. Unlike other artisans the potters are not available in every village.



they are found scattered at different places where suitable clay, the raw material required by them is available and cater to the demands of the adjoining about half a dozen villages. About seventy families of potters are scattered over the Ghamarwin tahsil alone, mainly concentrated in villages, Barota, Lethwin, Chalag, Koth and Mihara etc. The principal products of the potters are such earthen pots of local use as *handis*, *gharas*, *surahis*, *jhajras*, *kujas*, *chilums*, *divas* (lamps) and tiles. Almost all the potters in the area use red and black clay to provide glaze and paintings on the pots. The raw materials including clay, sand, fuel-wood and cow-dung cakes are either available locally or procurable from the adjoining villages. The fuel-wood is, however, not easy to procure on account of general shortage. The equipment of the artisans comprise basket, shovel, wooden hammer, *chak* (wheel), *hathri* (an open-mouth-vessel made of stone), *thathu* (a wooden device for beating surface) and *kanerus* (earthen devices for beating base and inner surface of pots) manufactured by and obtained from local carpenters, blacksmiths and masons. The work is usually carried on with the help of family members and employment per unit varies from two to four hands. The potters usually cater to the needs of village community and in turn get customary payments in kind or in cash. The surplus of their produce is disposed of in the adjoining villages.

The brisk months of the industry coincide with the sowing and harvesting periods i.e. from March to June and October to November. Rainy season from July to September, is a slack season for them. Again from December to February, due to intense cold and humidity, they usually do not work much.

The quality of the products is usually poor. Proper glazes are not applied. The buyers are, however, prepared to offer more for glazed and better quality products. While the potters have evinced keen interest in learning glazing of earthen wares and in learning new techniques and designs, they lack local training facilities. On the other hand they are reluctant to leave their hearths and homes for acquiring latest techniques in the far off training centres. The potters wheel, in vogue, involves much strain on the potters and effects their health and efficiency. Plans are afoot to introduce new model potter-wheels with ball bearings.

A potter generally works in his court-yard with a deep pit to store and process clay and a furnace nearby. The clay is dug, and, with the help of a shovel filled in the basket and dried in the sun. It is then beaten with a wooden hammer and water is mixed to soften whereafter it is put into the pit and kept there for a couple of days for fermentation and softening. Thereafter it is kneaded. Small lumps are then prepared into different sizes and are processed on the potters *chaks* (wheel) and given a rough shape of the desired pot. The rough shaped pot is then placed in *nathri* (a stone vessel with open mouth) and is enlarged with hand and by beating the

surface with *thathu*. It is then set in the upper portion of a broken pitcher and is allowed to dry. In order to harden the pot, its surface is beaten with *kanerus* and *thathu* by adding sand to it. The pot is then glazed with red clay, and artistic touch is applied with black clay by painting flowers etc. Finally dried pots, in a lot, are burnt in the furnace.

The demand for earthen wares, though extenuated by the metallic utensils, yet have not suffered significant fall as these wares have their own utility. However, prospects for expansion of the industry are slim.

**Gold and silver smithy :** Families of gold and silver smiths in Ghamarwin tahsil, are fairly well scattered throughout the area. Out of the lot two families of Ghamarwin village are more celebrated. The main items manufactured are naturally such ornaments as are within the reach of people and include *shingar patti* and *suhag tikka* for forehead, *laung, nath* and *tilli* for nose, ear rings, *murki* and *kante* for ears, *chack phool* for head, necklaces for neck, finger rings, wristles and *gajre* and *pajebis* for ankles. The designs are generally shaped by the goldsmiths themselves keeping in view the choice and taste of the local customers which are governed by the traditional or current fashions. In fact designs are generally the same as in vogue in the more advanced areas. The artisans also carve, small images on the plates, used for worship or charity, and different ornaments used in the temples.

The main metal is purchased from the market by the customers themselves and is handed over to the artisans for manufacture. It is only rarely that the artisans manufacture ornaments with their own material for sale. The manufacture to that extent is limited to such sundry items as small earrings or silver ornaments. Mostly silver ornaments are manufactured for the population of the district which is mainly rural and economically poor and thus unable to afford gold.

Gold and silver smiths require more tools as compared to other artisans and thus have to invest comparatively little more. The essential equipments generally consist of a hand blower, about two mouth blowers, few hammers, a scratching plate with a scratching holder, a couple of large sized tongs and some small sized tongs to handle the delicate operations, cutting scissors or blades, few flatners, few small and large sized patterns and moulds, burning moulds, some sticks to be used to round up the material, one or two furnaces and some safes or iron almirahs. An efficient weighing set is another important item. The equipment, generally imported from Delhi, is often Indian made. The industry once enjoyed great popularity and patronage but is now on the decline. One reason for this state of affairs is that gold-smiths have earned a bad name for their malpractices. Also taste, habits and fashion are rapidly changing, in favour of disuse or less use of the ornaments. Though some work for gold smiths is available throughout

the year but they have a brisk trade on occasions of fairs and marriages especially, the latter.

Gold or silver has to undergo a long series of processes to take the final shape of an ornament. If the material is old and in broken bits, it is first heated and melted, and if new it is only heated to softening point. The material is then processed into wires or plates and beaten into final shape. Different parts, thus crafted, are then assembled and pearls etc., if need be, are embedded. The ornaments are finally ready for use.

**Blacksmithy:** Occasionally the village carpenters may carry the ordinary job of a blacksmith, such as minor repairs of agricultural implements. But there is a separate community of blacksmiths so sprinkled that a family is generally available in every significant village. They manufacture various tools and implements of iron, required by the farmer's or other artisans such as the potters, basketmakers, carpenters and masons. They usually manufacture *darati* (sickle), *darat* (big sickle), *kulhari* (axe), *phal* (ploughshare), *hathora* (hammer), *basola* (adze), *khilna* or *kudali* and *tasla* etc., commonly needed by the cultivators in their daily operations. As a general practice the farmers bring iron themselves from the nearby markets such as Bilaspur and the blacksmiths help them convert the same into various kinds of implements on traditional payment in kind or in cash. The cultivators pay him in kind twice in a year. He has a workshop in a big room, always in an untidy mess, equipped with a forge to light fire, an anvil (harn), hammers, tongs and a pair of bellows. The process of manufacturing is a laborious one. At first the iron is made red hot in the fire in a forge provided with a large pair of bellows, to supply air and then the blacksmith takes it out of the forge with the help of a pair of tongs and places it on the anvil. The owner of the iron then is required to strike it with a heavy hammer till the iron has been shaped to conform to the required implement or a tool. After that the craftsman with the help of his small hammer gives it a final shape and lastly to strengthen it the product is dipped in the cold water. As the cost and quantity of iron varies from tool to tool so also the charges of various tools and implements differ.

**Stone products:** Demand for certain stone articles has been in existence down the ages. Manufacture of such stone products is fairly widespread and being practised almost all over the district. Low wages and non-availability of improved tools are the stumbling blocks of the trade. The artisans, generally live from hand to mouth and at times, do not even possess adequate means to meet the cost of tools. The industry has, however, good scope for expansion and the product if properly marketed in places like Ghamarwin and Bilaspur could fetch more.

The main articles of production manufactured to order are *kundis* (mortars), *kharals* (boat shaped mortars), *sils* (piece of stone on which condiments etc. are ground with a muller), *gharats* (mill-stones), *chaklas* and *chaunci*. Raw material being stone is readily available without cost. Chisels (small and large), hammers (small and large), divider, large iron rods with levellers are used as tools by the artisans and can be procured locally. To process the articles, pieces of stones are soaked into the water for about twelve hours to soften and then given a circular shape followed by marking with the divider, according to the desired size, and, accordingly hewn with chisel and hammer. Thereafter finishing and artistic touches are imparted. Usually it takes two days to complete an ordinary article and its cost varies from two to five rupees.

**Mat making :** Mat making is also one of the primitive cottage industries of the area though not being paid full attention at present because of other sources of income and less demand in the market for the products due to availability of cheaper substitutes. This industry which used to give part-time employment to a number of ladies also declined because of scanty market and afforestation of palm trees in the area.

**Katha :** In the past, the *katha* (betel leaf paste) making was a flourishing industry but now it has dwindled down because *khair* trees (*Acacia catechu*) are now only available in small number in the private owned lands. The unscientific felling of *khair* trees, during the Second World War, landed this industry in a precarious state. *Katha* is manufactured by indigenous methods by people well versed in all the processes of its manufacture. The heartwood of *khair* tree is chipped into very small and thin pieces with the axes and are boiled in water in earthen pots placed in rows on open furnaces and extraction continues for long hours. The extract is then concentrated and set aside for cooling.

**Sericulture :** This industry was given recognition by the erstwhile rulers of Bilaspur State, so much so that the felling of mulberry trees was made a crime and plantation of such trees was encouraged through all possible methods. But the industry could not make much headway, because the public was almost prejudiced against the trade and did not practise it because of religious and moral reasons.

The literacy, general awakening in the masses and efforts of the Department of Industries, have of late given great rise to this industry in the district which is flourishing day by day. At present about five hundred men and women get employment during the season and the Department of Industries has set up a farm and a reeling factory at Ghamarwin and also provides seeds to the masses and purchases cocoons from them. This industry has a great scope for expansion and necessary steps are already being taken in this direction.

## POWER

Power development is generally a source of setting up of industrial enterprises which can flourish only with good means of communication. During the past, water alone was used as a power for running such small industries as water-mills or husking-mills. Electricity was practically unknown. In order to produce that power sporadic local surveys were made to find suitable sites for generating hydro-electricity from various streamlets. In the year 1935 services of E. G. Mackie, Resident Engineer (Mandi Hydro-Electric Scheme), Punjab P. W. D. Electricity Branch, were borrowed from the Punjab Government to survey the possibilities of developing electric power to the extent of atleast fifty kilowatts, in Bilaspur. He carried out an investigation in August, 1935, visited four sites, namely, Al *khad*, Kharsi Waters, Ghamrola *khad* and Ruped *khad*, and submitted a report alongwith his calculations. He concluded that of the four sites visited only two were capable of developing the required power, namely, the Aii *khal* and the Ruped *khad*. He recommended that Ruped *khal* Scheme would be better on account of lower costs, provided that the water supply there did not fall below a minimum measurement. A number of other surveys followed but before any action could possibly be taken in this behalf air was full of news about the Bhakra Dam Scheme. The Punjab Government resumed their talks on the subject with the State and the local schemes were shelved.

Against these failures of efforts for providing power from local *khads*, proposals for the construction of Bhakra Dam were slowly advancing further. The idea of construction of a high dam on the Satluj originated in 1908 by Sir Louis Danes, the then Governor of the Punjab as a result of a tour from Seoni to Bilaspur and thence onward to Rupar when he floated down the Satluj river on *khatnaos*. The sites, one in the Seoni gorge and another at Bhakra were tentatively selected and although estimates for a 60.9 m high dam were drawn up, the cost was found to be prohibitive and the scheme shelved. The proposal was revived in 1915 and the present site at Bhakra, finally selected. The site was found to have better rocks and gorge was also narrower hence better possibilities for building a higher dam with larger storage capacity. Twelve years later a Committee of Geologists and Engineers made a detailed examination of the site and a higher dam of either 137 metres or 152 metres was recommended, but no progress was made except the forming of the estimates.

In the year 1938-39 there was a severe drought in the districts of Rohtak and Hissar, resulting in great loss to life and cattle and the Bhakra Dam Scheme again came into the forefront because the reservoir which the dam was to create was expected to supply water to these dry areas. But due to the outbreak of the Second World War, the project could not be taken in hand at that time. In 1944 Dr. L. Savage of United States of America,

a world known authority on high dams, visited the site of the proposed dam. The town of Bilaspur being situated at a height of R.L. 1600 would have been partially submerged if the height of the dam were kept at 152 metres. Subsequently however it was agreed to raise the height of the dam to 207.2 metres from the foundation, the highest straight gravity dam in the world, forming a lake eighty kilometres long and about 3.2 kilometres wide. Subsequently it was visualised that the proposed dam would entirely submerge the centuries old town of Bilaspur, situated nearly fifty-six kilometres upstream from Bhakra.

The work of construction was actually started on November 17, 1955, when the first bucket of concrete was placed in the foundations of the dam, by Late Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru, the then Prime Minister of India. Steering through all the difficulties and working round the clock, about three hundred engineers and about 12,000 workmen, skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled, built the dam at a steady pace. The first major work that had to be undertaken was the diversion of the river and dewatering of the foundations. Two tunnels about 150 diameter on each abutment and about 800 metres in length alongwith two rockfill coffer dams were constructed.

A total of about ten million cubic yards of excavation was involved in the dam and appurtenant works, including the two power houses. In November, 1954, the Satluj river was diverted through the right diversion tunnel. Stripping of the left abutment was started in November, 1953, and that of the right in May 1954.

The first land mark in the progress of the dam was the partial storage of the Satluj water behind the rising dam during the monsoon of 1958. Thus the birth of Gobind Sagar took place on July 3, 1958. This created a cascade of about twenty metres height and was a sight to be seen rather than described. During the monsoon of 1959, the floods were passed over spillway blocks kept at El. 1440, and the reservoir level rose to El. 1447. The water stored in Gobind Sagar in 1961 was up to El. 1554. By 1962 about 5.1 million acre feet of water was stored in the Gobind Sagar, raising the level to El. 1610. The lake level in the summer of 1963 was raised to 1640. The reservoir extended over a distance of 96.5 kilometres and impounded eight million acre-feet of water.

The dam having gone through many and varied stages of construction as detailed above, was completed on November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1962. It has a maximum height of 225.5 metres above the lowest foundation with the top at El. 1740 feet above the mean sea level and thus the highest straight gravity dam in the world 4.2 metres higher than the world famous Hoover Dam. Two power plants are located symmetrically, one on the left bank and other on the right bank of the river, immediately below the dam. The power plant on the left side has five units of 90,000 kw. capacity each. Each unit is supplied

with water by its own steel-lined penstock of 4.5 metres diameter; passing through the body of the dam and thence to the concrete lined tunnel in the rock between the dam and the power plant.

The power plant on the right side could house five units of 1,20,000 kilowatts capacity each. The general lay-out is the same as that of the left power plant.

The annual target of irrigation from the dam is thirty-six lakh acres of land and the present hydro-electric capacity from the left bank power house alone is 6,52,000 kilowatts. With the completion of the power house on the right bank the hydro-electric capacity further increased to about 1.2 million kilowatts. The cost of the project, totals about Rs. 173 crores. On January 9, 1963 the then Lieutenant Governor of Himachal Pradesh performed the switching-on ceremony of Bhakra electric supply to the New Bilaspur Township. Previously the Township was supplied electric power from the Jogindernagar project.

The Himachal Pradesh State Electricity Board maintains the supply of electricity. The hydro-electric supply is being obtained from Jogindernagar and Bhakra Ganguwal power stations. The latter being a standby arrangement, and is switched on, only on the failure of electricity from Jogindernagar. There is no power station in the district. Within the district the supply is regulated through 115 various sub-stations. On March 31, 1973 there were as many as 1579 domestic and commercial lighting connections and 140 industrial connections in the district. The number of villages electrified till November, 1972 stood at three hundred and seventy eight.

During the last few years, the consumption of hydro-electricity both for industrial and domestic purposes has increased considerably which fact reveals accelerated pace of execution of development plans and greater awareness on the part of the people to take advantage of this amenity and keenness of the Government to extend electricity with a rapid speed to almost all parts of this hitherto remote area. The annual consumption of electricity by various industries in the district stood at 53278 units in 1961-62 and 132509 units in 1971-72. The increase, within a span of ten years, is about three fold and is a happy sign of future development of the area. Apart from industrial consumption of electricity domestic consumption has also been equally increasing. In 1961-62, 1,01,304 kilowatts, in 1966-67, 6,37,970 kilowatts and in 1971-72, 15,56,921 kilowatts of electricity was consumed. The increase in consumption is simply phenomenal.

The hydro-electricity as a means of power has appeared on the scene only recently. The traditional source of supply of power has been, as it still continues to be, the water. Not that the water has been harnessed at a

grand scale for generating power but, wherever possible and practicable, the water is utilised for running the primitive mills in which corn is converted into powder or meal. Utilisation of water power in this manner has been rendered possible by the peculiar topography of the area which abounds in springs, streamlets, streams and river. These water-mills are known as *gharats* in the local parlance. This can, it is estimated, grind about two to three maunds of grains per day. During the rainy season many of the streams and streamlets convert into tempestuous torrents with great volume of water and the temporary bunds created for diverting water to feed the *gharats* are washed away as a result of which many of them have to stay idle. The water-mill by itself regarded insufficient to support a family and, therefore, the owner mainly depends upon agriculture, treating the mill as a subsidiary means of subsistence. According to the *Assessment Report\** of 1933, "The usual charge for grinding corn, throughout the State, is two seers per maund '*kham*'. A mill-stone can grind, on the average, ten maunds '*kham*' of grain in twenty-four hours. Each stone, therefore, gives a profit of twenty seers '*kham*' of '*atta*' daily, worth at least Rs. 4/- or Rs. 8/- per mensem, to the mill owner. The situation and the period for which a mill is able to work are the two principal factors for judging the capacity of a mill for making profit. The best mills are situated on the Ghamber, the Ghamrola and the Ali Khad in the Sadr tahsil and the Ruped Khad in the Ghamarwin tahsil." These observations hold good, more or less, even today. It is estimated that there are at present about 1000 water-mills in the working condition. These figures reflect the extent of the use of water power in the area.

Another source of power in a pre-dominantly agricultural tract like Bilaspur is obviously the bullock power used for the tillage of land to the exclusion of any other power. As many as about 30,000 ploughs drawn by the bullocks, have been enumerated in the area. The number of ploughs presupposes, generally speaking, twice the number of the bullocks required to draw them. Wind as a means of power has not yet appeared on the scene, except for sifting and winnowing the grains.

### MINING INDUSTRY

The district can boast of abundant reserves of lime-stone at Harkhar, Laghat, Panjgani and Kothipura all of which are under excavation. The Department of Industries has earned a revenue of Rs. 8,628 in 1970-71, Rs. 12,178 in 1971-72 and Rs. 19,473 in 1972-73. These good quality lime-stone reserves are able to feed a cement factory for years if ever established. At present all the four lime-stone lessees are selling dolomite to the Fertilizer Factory, Nangal (in Punjab). In addition to lime-stone exploration there are as many as thirty parties engaged in quarrying slates.

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\*Chandu Lall, *Assessment Report of Bilaspur, 1933*.



## LARGE SCALE INDUSTRY

**Rosin and Turpentine Factory :** The lonely and the only large scale industry in the district, the Rosin and Turpentine Factory located at Bilaspur, was commissioned on June 6, 1969 and is now working at its full rated capacity by providing employment to over two hundred workers. The design of the plant of the factory is based on the latest and most up-to-date process technology for the manufacture of rosin and turpentine. Based on this technology the design of the process plant and equipment has been developed incorporating the principles of optimum utilisation of men, material and resources. Having equipped with the most modern machinery in the whole of Asia, the factory has upto now produced rosin and turpentine oil over one crore and fifty thousand rupees. The yearwise turnout of the factory is as follows :

| Year    | Rosin (quintals) | Turpentine (litres) |
|---------|------------------|---------------------|
| 1969-70 | 31,955           | 7,48,856            |
| 1970-71 | 47,487           | 11,67,865           |
| 1971-72 | 48,940           | 12,35,517           |
| 1972-73 | 49,954           | 12,44,365           |

## COTTAGE INDUSTRIES

**Weaving :** About the year 1947, one unit for the manufacture of handloom cloth was started by a private enterprise in Bilaspur town but it failed. In the year 1955, Department of Industries visualized the necessity of starting a training-cum-production centre in weaving, dyeing and spinning at Bilaspur but subsequently two centres were started one at Bilaspur town and the other at Ghamarwin proper. The Rural Industrial Training Institute is engaged in imparting training in weaving, hand painting, and dry-cleaning at present.

Some of the ex-trainees of weaving centre Bilaspur and Ghamarwin have settled in the trade and are producing handloom cloth. The quality of cloth produced by them is fairly good. There is also a Government cotton liveries production centre at Bilaspur and one weavers co-operative society in village Talwara, tahsil Ghamarwin. The decentralisation scheme is also operating in the area under which earlier the Department of Industries and now the State *khandi* and village Industries Board issues yarn to the weavers and collects the cloth.

**Carpentry or furniture manufacture :** This industry has also large scope for improvement and expansion and the Department of Industries has

helped in starting about six small-scale furniture making units and more are coming up, the furniture articles of which, to some extent are sold in the local market. Out of them one belongs to the Industrial co-operative (carpenter society) Bilaspur and the products of the units, though costly, are to some extent, tolerable in quality. The carpenters used to manufacture furniture with no knowledge of and regard for economic production. The quality used to be very poor and almost all the furniture required for various Government offices had to be imported from Kartarpur in Punjab. The Department of Industries started one Industrial Extension Centre (wood working) at Bilaspur and other at Ghamarwin for the manufacture of furniture articles to cope with the demand of various Government Departments. These centres have now been put under the control of State Mineral and Industrial Development Corporation. There are as many as two hundred and seventy-two carpenters in the district. Industrial loan is being advanced to these artisans for expansion of new units. This is perhaps the only industry in the district which is providing fair wages to the artisans. This industry has not suffered any set-back with the passage of time because of its inherent advantages and importance. It has rather made certain improvements, as the demand for furniture etc. is on an increase and this provides opportunities for more artisans and more improvements in the technique of work.

**Shoe model making Industry :** In all there are about seven hundred shoe makers in the district. It is estimated that one leather worker requires about a dozen pairs of lasts in a year and there are about thirty-three families of leather workers in tahsil Ghamarwin alone. The shoe frame manufacturing cottage unit is perhaps the only unit of its kind in village Halwari of the the district manufacturing about thirty-five pairs a month, with the result that it can not cope adequately with the demand and thus a large number of such frames has to be imported from the adjoining markets in Punjab. This reflects the employment potential in this particular industry. The main products of the artisan's family are lasts and shoes.

It was after partition that the reproductions attracted fancy of the local artisans and now are preferred to the imported ones.

The chief raw material, namely mulberry, or *sheesham* or mango timber, is available locally or in the adjoining villages on cheap rates so much so that the raw wood for a pair of model costs twenty five to seventy-five paise only. The imported polish is readily available either in Ghamarwin or Bilaspur markets.

Artisan's equipments comprise two or three axes, hand saw, saws, adze, about a dozen of files, both round and flat, hand drills, sand papers and brushes. Some of the tools are available locally, so also these can be repaired locally but the rest have to be imported mainly from Delhi. The

main products of the artisans are half-foot frames (for *desi* shoes) of three to five inch size, full-foot frames (for boots) of three to nine inch size and last with heels (sandals) of three to nine inch size.

The problems of this industry include inadequate finance, non availability of desired quantity of tools, non-adoption of this profession by more artisans and lack of transport facilities. In the first stage of process a piece of timber of a required size is cut with sharp adze and about two hour's hewing enables the worker to give it a rough shape of last. The article has to be measured after short intervals to keep the edges in order. Thereafter the finishing touch is given with round and flat files. After the definite size, shape and proper finish with the help of sharp saw it is cut into two parts in a manner that it becomes easy to rejoin them wherever required. Final finish is given with the use of file and sand paper and the product is then polished with spirit.

The cobblers and shoe makers are in huge concentrations in the district and there is scope for future expansion also. The Department of Industries is running leather trade in Rural Industrial Institute at Bilaspur and the artisans are also switching over to improved methods of production which has actually increased in the past few years. The superior leather has also to be imported from outside. There are about five Leather Workers Industrial Co-operative Societies also and about five units have been advanced loan assistance for expansion and improvements.

**Paddy husking machines**—A reasonably sufficient quantity of paddy is grown in this district. The crop is mostly consumed locally. The traditional method of conversion of paddy into rice has been the hand-pounding. Of late there has been a current of thought that any laborious work may be mechanised in order to relieve the strain on the man. As a result, about thirty husking machines have been installed in different parts of the district. These are either driven by electric power or operated with diesel or even water. Obviously this industry is an improvement on the traditional method of hand-pounding of rice. Nevertheless it is not altogether free from blemish inasmuch as the local people think that these machines have not only affected employment potential but also the diet value of the rice. As against this prejudice the main reason for rise of this industry as well as for its popularity is that machines provide a very easy and quick process and greater out turn without involving laborious efforts. The number of machines already installed is regarded enough so further scope for the expansion of the industry is almost ruled out.

**Oil crushing machines**—These machines, about fifteen in number, are also new-comers on the scene affecting adversely rather chasing out of existence, the traditional oil *ghanis*, locally known as *kohlus* which in turn, were also not many. Speedier and greater out-turn by these machines are the reasons for their introduction and popularity instead of oil *ghanis* lacking these qualities. Even this small number of oil expellers, so far installed in different parts of the district, is regarded sufficient to cope with the work expected of them and it is thought that there is no scope for increase in their number. The limitation on the scope of expansion is primarily attributable to low production of oil seeds in the area and the import of the oil seeds being uneconomical.

**Timber sawing machines**—Sawing of timber is an age-old industry. Sawing machines are certainly an improvement on the traditional method of sawing by means of manual labour. The advantages of the sawing machines are better, quicker and cheaper sawing. \*Twenty-eight machines have been installed in different parts of the district. In addition to what is locally available the timber is also imported from Mandi district of Himachal Pradesh and the Punjab. As the demand for furniture is very likely to increase in the future it is thought that there is a scope for expansion of this industry in order to supply ready timber for small or large-scale furniture units that may be set up.

**Cotton carding machines**—The local artisans who from times immemorial have been carding and processing the cotton with their own hands have been deprived of their employment because of installation of about twenty cotton carding machines in the district. Due to small quantity of cotton produced locally future scope of these machines appears to be precarious.

**Corn grinding machines** About twenty machines have been set up all over the district. These are an improvement on or a substitute for the local and traditional *gharats*, and, on the other hand, provide relief to a number of local people in the matter of procuring milled corn easily. The reason is that all weather *gharats* are few in number, many are washed away during rainy season, and many others cease to function during the summer because of non-availability or inadequacy of water feeding them, and, not a few have been submerged with the rise of the water in the Gobind Sagar. These factors combine to put the local people to great hardship as they are

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\*Tahsil Sadar : Deoli, Dhar, Banola, Bilaspur. Sakroha, Soha, Sodha, Jabal, Mherh, Chambi Kaghrun, Loharra, Kothi, Rani Kotla, Chhakoh, Silna.

\*Tahsil Talai, Nabti, Dakari, Ghamarwin, Aur, Majhwar, Kalar. Patialra, Kot, Ghamarwin : Dari, Damehra, Paliala, Paplihu.

required to travel long distances to get the grains ground. The installation of corn grinding machines has, therefore, proved a boon to the people removing their peculiar difficulties. It is, however, thought that further increase in such machines has no scope.

**Assembling of sewing machines :** Rapid increase in population, fast changing fashions and styles of garments and general tendency on the part of the people to get their garments stitched without much delay have given, to a great extent, fertile ground for tailoring work which pre-supposes increase in demand for sewing machines. In the New Bilaspur Township a unit for the assembling of sewing machines has been set up and is being run with the financial assistance, given by the Industries Department, in the shape of loan. The capacity of the unit is to produce about ten machines per month.

**Book binding machines :** With the spread of education and increase in literacy more and more books and stationery articles are likely to be in demand in future. Life of books is enhanced if these are properly bound. It appears that with this end in view a unit of book-binding has been established in the New Bilaspur Township where file covers and card-board covers of books are also produced besides work of binding books. The unit, to start with, is being run with the assistance, in the shape of loan, granted by the Department of Industries for expansion.

**Scissors and razor making :** Demand for scissors is directly linked with the increase in the tailoring industry which, as has been already noted, has a bright future. Clean shave trend has gained a wide currency during these days. It is this tendency on the part of the young and old that has given rise to the demand for shaving material of which razor is an indispensable part.

**Ban making industry :** *Ban* is the local term for the thin strings out of which bedsteads are made. This is produced of the *bhabar* grass which is abundantly available within the district. Bedsteads form one of the essential items of furniture for a majority of the people of the area and, therefore, there is reasonably good demand for *ban*. In order to ensure greater and quicker output of this material about twelve *ban* making machines are working throughout the district.

## INDUSTRIAL EXTENSION CENTRES

There are three Industrial Extension Centres working in this district viz. Industrial Extension Centre (Rural), Ghamarwin, Industrial Extension Centre (Wood work), Bilaspur, and Industrial Extension Centre (Textiles), Bilaspur. The centre of wood work has been transferred under the control of Himachal Pradesh Industrial and Industrial Development

Corporation and that of Textile under the Himachal Pradesh State Handicraft Board. These centres impart training to local artisans to make their skill upto date and allow free use of such machinery as were installed in the centres. Besides this, the centres catered to the demands of different Departments in respect of cotton livery and furniture item. All these centres while in the control of Industries Department produced goods worth Rs. 3,85,171 and sold goods worth Rs. 3,93,254 during the last three years. The reasons for the figures of sale on higher side is that some of the stocks produced earlier to the above period were also sold during the period under report.

**The Himachal Pradesh Mineral and Industrial Development Corporation Limited, Simla :** This corporation was registered under the *Companies Act, 1966*. Furniture Factory, Bilaspur, which is under the management of this corporation, has now become a profit earning enterprise and during the year 1972-73 has shown a net profit of Rs. 6,011 as against the production and sale figures of Rs. 1,17,251 and Rs. 1,33,105 respectively.

**Industrial Estate :** Land measuring 98 bighas has been aquired for setting up an industrial estate in village Kharian near Bilaspur township. A sum of three lakh rupees has been tentatively earmarked for the development of the proposed Industrial Area. Developed plots will be leased out to the entrepreneurs on easy terms for setting up industrial units.

### **Financial Assistance**

In the year 1956 the *State Aid to Industries Act, Punjab* was applied to Himachal Pradesh. The people in general were shy of investment in industries. With strenuous efforts put in by the field staff and liberal State aid in the shape of loans and grants given by the Government the people were persuaded to take up industries in the district. Loans are sanctioned at moderate rate of interest and the period of complete repayment of the same with interest due thereon, is ordinarily nine years. The recovery starts on the expiry of two years from the date of the payment of the loan and is made in seven equal instalments. However, the interest is payable yearly. In pursuance of the programme approved under the *State Aid to Industries Act*, a large number of small scale Industrial units were given financial assistance amounting to Rs. 3.15,000 during the Third Five Year Plan and during fourth Five Year Plan period (upto 31st March, 1973) a sum of Rs. 3,14,500 has been advanced as industrial loan to various entrepreneurs, artisans and cottage units in the district for the setting up of new units and development of existing units. The units mainly include composite units which are popular being need-based village industries in the rural as well as urban areas of the district. Other units include single band saw units, units to manufacture washing soap, furniture, hosiery goods, handloom goods.

woollen shawls, sheet metal goods etc. Draft proposal for Fifth Five Year Plan includes a sum of fifteen lac rupees to be advanced to various entrepreneurs as industrial loans and subsidies in Bilaspur District for the development of small scale village and cottage industries.

### Industrial Potentials and Plans for future developments

The district is predominantly agricultural. Agriculture here is a seasonal occupation. A considerable period of time, especially the mid-winter season of the people is mostly vacant. To utilise this leisure for the economic benefit of the people is a fundamental essential. No progress in agriculture is feasible unless the standard of the life of the cultivator improves. It can only improve if the time at his disposal is utilised to his greatest benefit. The population is multiplying. The burden on the land is thereby becoming heavier and almost unbearable. The pressure of population on agriculture is leading to impoverishment of the agriculturists. To serve as an attractive diversion the rural industries must multiply and become efficient and paying. Surplus labour, ample availability of many a raw-material usable for industrialisation; expanding market, spreading education and increasing contacts with the advancing world have placed at the disposal of the people many opportunities for self-improvement. It is so for them to seize these opportunities to invest their time and labour in crafts and trades to best advantage and to organise themselves together to reap best fruits of their labour.

Numerous part-time cottage industries offer avenues to be taken up during the vacant season by the people. Poultry farming, agriculture, dairy farming, sheep breeding, gardening and vegetable culture and fruit cultivation are some of such industries. The *khair* trees which grow in abundance in the district, form the main raw material for lac rearing. If adopted and properly directed, this can also form a paying occupation in view of growing use of shellac. *Gur* making is also important. Fans, and brooms from palm leaves can be made. Lime burning can be practised. Knitting, and embroidery can be developed extensively. Oil crushing too has some scope. Not much oil seed is grown in the district. But whatever there are they have their own importance as a necessity of life. Oil is used as lubricant, as substitute for ghee, as basic material for soap-making and for many other purposes. In the district a large quantity of oil is imported. It is not possible to dispense with its imports altogether. Jams and pickles can be given a trial. Ginger is a famous commercial product in the district and it is estimated that about fifty quintals of ginger is produced annually in

co-operatives can combine the resources of the members for setting up a small-scale ginger processing industry. In fact steps are being taken by the Industries Department to encourage dry ginger (*sunt*) industry.

Animal husbandry itself is as important as agriculture. The number of cattle reared by the people compares very favourably with other parts of the country but little attention has been paid to the crafts that can be based on their products. Such industries can be based on milk, animal hair, hides and skins, horns and bones.

Glue making seems to be feasible because a by-product of the leather industry is glue. It is extracted by boiling the leather strips and hooves etc. Demand for it as a common adhesive is increasing.

Ghee is an important food article. In pure form, it is becoming rare and fortunately adulteration is looked down upon. Large quantity of it is exported every year. With the growth of dairy farms, ghee making can also become rationalised at these centres. Soap making too is a promising industry. All the raw material except caustic soda are available in the district.

Scents and toilet products need re-vitalisation, rationalisation and refinement. With the growth of co-operatives and marketing facilities, it can flourish. Cap making, preparation of brushes and button manufacture can be tried as raw materials for all these are not difficult to procure.

### LABOUR AND EMPLOYERS' ORGANISATIONS

There is but only one big industry i.e. Rosin and Turpentine Factory in the district. Road-making programme is going on for some years in the district and the casual labour employed on road-making has bound himself in a sort of loose union. Besides Rosin and Turpentine Factory at Bilaspur the other registered factories as on 31st March, 1973 are Steel Sharpening and Air Tool Repair Shop, Electrical Repair Shop, Bhakra, Himachal Pradesh Government Transport Work Shop, Bhakra, Auto Repair Shop, Bhakra, Euclid Shop Bhakra, Bhakra Work Shop; Bhakra Left Bank Power House, and Compressure House, Bhakra.

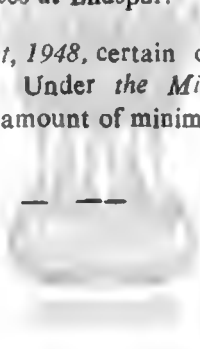
The transport in Himachal Pradesh is nationalised and the transport workers especially the Drivers and Conductors, have their union, and naturally the transport workers working in Bilaspur district region are members of their union.



to deal with the labour problems of Bhakra. This is mentioned, because the Dam, at least half of it, is in this district. The organisations claiming the membership of the various kinds of labour mentioned above are the Bilaspur Mazdoor Union (Indian National Trade Union Congress), the Himachal Government Transport Workers Union, and the Nangal Bhakra Mazdoor Sangh (AITUC).

The labour organisation was conceived in the Himachal Pradesh in 1956. On account of paucity of the staff in the organisation and lack of sense of trade unionism amongst the labourers the actual working of the organisation became visible only in 1958. The labour unions in the district such as the Bilaspur Mazdoor Union (Indian National Trade Union Congress) and the Himachal Government Transport Workers Union (AITUC), Rosin and Turpentine Factory Workers Union, which have been registered with the Registrar of Trade Unions, Himachal Pradesh, under the *Indian Trade Unions Act, 1926*, have their head offices at Bilaspur.

Under the *Factories Act, 1948*, certain conditions to the advantage of the labour have been created. Under the *Minimum Wages Act of 1948* the labour is guaranteed a certain amount of minimum wages.



# **Chapter VI**

## **BANKING, TRADE AND COMMERCE**

### **BANKING AND FINANCE**

#### **INDIGENOUS BANKING**

As elsewhere in these tracts the system of banking, in the strict sense of the term, as is understood now, was unknown in this district during the remote past. The indigenous method of saving, it appears, was either to convert the money into ornaments, or so long as the paper currency did not fully replace the metal currency, to hoard it with themselves. The system of lending money, was also prevalent. At times security was taken in the shape of ornaments, movable property and personal services. The money-lenders were spread over the entire area of the district. They did not constitute a distinct section of the population but were a part of the general population pursuing other vocations like their fellow residents. Some of them, however, were exclusively traders and money-lenders. Out of about four hundred families of non-agriculturists about fifty money-lenders and traders were living in the urban area of the Bilaspur town itself.

Credit facilities, were naturally limited, and the people had to borrow money on rates of interests ranging from 30 to 40 per cent from the money-lenders. This age-old indigenous system of banking i.e. securing credit facilities, continues, in the form of local money-lender to whom the borrowers, in times of need, resort. These *sahukars* are, however, struggling hard to maintain their position against the facilities available through the modern banking system.

In these circumstances the money was naturally shy and there were perhaps no individuals nor recognised institutions receiving deposits from the people and thus utilising the money for common good. Moreover the general poor economic standard of the people precluded the possibility of founding banks with a view to deriving the maximum benefit out of money by putting it in active circulation. With the passage of time and the awakening of the general consciousness necessity of having a bank came to be realised increasingly.

In 1944 therefore, the then princely administration started, for the first time, a bank known as the Bank of Bilaspur Limited, with five-fold

objectives namely, to serve as an incentive for the people to save; to provide a basis for financing development schemes of the erstwhile State by concentrating all financial resources; to assist the operation of the Bilaspur Commercial Corporation and facilitate development of trade in the State; to form a nucleus of long-term credit arrangements and to assist and supplement a system of short-term credit organisation; and to help emancipate the State (Bilaspur) economically, to do away with poverty, disease, ignorance, idleness and squalor. The authorised capital of the bank with the equity share of ten rupees each was fixed at ten lacs. Issued and subscribed capital was five lacs. The paid up capital at five rupees per share was Rs. 2,41,488.

The objects for which the bank was established could not be achieved and liabilities ranged between Rs. 3,25,000 and Rs. 3,50,000. On May 7, 1952, the bank was, therefore, liquidated under section 203 of the *Indian Company's Act, 1913* and the Raja of Bilaspur, who was President of the bank was voted to be the liquidator.

After the merger of Bilaspur into Himachal Pradesh a branch of Himachal Pradesh State Co-operative Bank was established in Bilaspur and is functioning since April 12, 1956. The bank has provided considerable relief to the co-operative societies functioning within the district by financing them in the field of commercial and credit activities.

The agriculturists forming the predominant part of the population, in this district, need credit for their seasonal operations, purchase of cattle and agricultural tools and implements, ceremonial occasions, marketing and movements of crops, building houses, purchasing property immovable or otherwise, and for making permanent improvements in their holdings. In order to meet the expenditure on these items, loans both short term and long term are available. The villager is yet to be weaned away from the influence of unscrupulous creditors or the indigenous bankers. Though it cannot be denied that such money-lenders have had their own use and came to the rescue of the needy people in times of strain and stress but quite a few of them who seemed always sympathetically inclined to advance the desired loan thus imperceptibly spread their nets on the un-enlightened and the simple borrowers. The high rate of interest, fabrication of accounts and the allied malpractices are some of the sharper weapons in the armoury of the creditor to be used to fleece his debtor slowly and imperceptibly. The debtors on the other hand have to depend upon these *sahukars* because it is difficult for them to secure loans from other institutions on a short notice. In order to save the borrowers from being so exploited much has been done and is being done by the Government by way of enacting such legislations that compel some of the unscrupulous *sahukars* to be honest in dealing and to afford the debtor a variety of reliefs in this connection. *The Himachal Pradesh Debt Redemption*

*Act*, 1953 (Act No. X of 1953) is an example in this case. Apart from these measures, organisation of co-operative banks, advancement of short and long term *taccavi* loans, industrial loans and loans for house construction have, in their own way, greatly benefited the cultivators. On the top of it are the numerous financial facilities provided by the Development Department in the form of subsidies, etc. for various development purposes which have done away with the need for borrowing from the *sahukars* by the agriculturists. So far as the dependence of trade on the indigenous bankers is concerned as also loans for urgent social obligations, undefined religious purposes it is for the time being entirely in their hands and so long as the co-operative movement does not completely succeed in covering this sector, this indigenous class of traders-cum-*sahukars* is likely to hold the field and has its own usefulness.

### Indebtedness

Complete figures for indebtedness, rural and urban, are not available, because no enquiry in the indebtedness was ever instituted. Since its inception in 1956 the Himachal Pradesh Co-operative Bank has advanced the following amounts as loans which are indicative of, in a general way, the incidence of indebtedness :—

| Particulars  | 1955-56 | 1956-57  | 1957-58  | 1958-59  |
|--|---------|----------|----------|----------|
| Area of operation<br>Bilaspur district]                  |         |          |          |          |
| Number of societies<br>affiliated                        | 23      | 38       | 27       | 37       |
| Total deposits at the<br>end of the co-operative<br>year | —       | —        | —        | —        |
| Fixed deposits   | 5,700   | 63,048   | 3,74,779 | 4,50,894 |
| Savings  | 2,217   | 48,854   | 78,842   | 1,79,451 |
| Current  | 27,319  | 80,408   | 2,07,657 | 3,01,166 |
| Total working capital                                    | —       | 1,92,309 | 6,68,851 | 9,53,483 |
| Total loans advanced<br>to co-operative societies        | 43,660  | 94,719   | 19,963   | 1,06,690 |

## BANKING, TRADE AND COMMERCE

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Total loans recovered 523 51,719 66,549 1,11,645  
from co-operative societies

Rate of interest given on — — — —  
deposits

Fixed deposit 3% to 3½% 3% to 3½% 3% to 3½% 3% to 3½%

Savings 2% 2% 2% 2%

Current No interest on current deposits except on special arrangement.

Rate of interest charged on loans 6% 6% 6% 6%

| 1959-60   | 1960-61   | 1961-62   | 1962-63   | 1963-64   | 1964-65   | 1965-66   |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 47        | 50        | 53        | 51,719    | 76        | 81        | 86        |
| 3,38,228  | 2,86,444  | 1,46,251  | 1,29,137  | 1,06,812  | 95,350    | 2,33,522  |
| 2,21,623  | 2,44,374  | 3,52,657  | 3,73,927  | 3,36,898  | 5,05,716  | 7,26,680  |
| 2,01,979  | 2,08,064  | 2,19,342  | 1,94,411  | 1,60,543  | 2,20,475  | 1,92,947  |
| 8,28,258  | 7,81,677  | 7,73,254  | 8,07,244  | 8,32,119  | 10,00,054 | 11,27,001 |
| 3.66      | 4.71      | 3.06      | 3.27      | 13.49     | 17.79     | 23.59     |
| 2.77      | 5.10      | 3.17      | 2.02      | 12.01     | 18.03     | 20.81     |
| 3% to 3½% | 3% to 3½% | 3% to 3½% | 3% to 3½% | 3% to 3½% | 4 to 5%   | 4 to 5%   |
| 2%        | 2%        | 2%        | 2%        | 2%        | 3%        | 3%        |
| 6%        | 6%        | 6%        | 6%        | 6%        | 7 to 8%   | 7 to 8%   |

| 1966-67   | 1957-68   | 1968-69   | 1969-70   | 1970-71   | 1971-72   |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 89        | 91        | 93        | 94        | 96        | 97        |
| 1,95,969  | 2,05,825  | 3,05,113  | 3,74,302  | 4,08,695  | 5,00,682  |
| 7,35,011  | 8,55,914  | 9,64,262  | 10,80,818 | 11,13,708 | 12,66,991 |
| 1,51,868  | 3,68,255  | 2,47,289  | 3,51,846  | 2,88,657  | 1,65,371  |
| 11,78,884 | 16,67,727 | 21,15,559 | 22,36,787 | 21,48,575 | 20,64,691 |
| 23.52     | 28.52     | 28.27     | 28.52     | 30.74     | 19.88     |
| 24.02     | 27.05     | 19.05     | 27.05     | 31.47     | 22.62     |
| 4 to 5%   | 4 to 5%   | 4 to 5%   | 4 to 5%   | 4½ to 7%  | 4½ to 7%  |
| 3%        | 3%        | 3%        | 3%        | 4%        | 4%        |
| 7 to 8%   | 7 to 8%   | 7 to 8%   | 7 to 8%   | 7 to 8%   | 7 to 8%   |

The actual indebtedness must necessarily be regarded considerably more. The agriculturist once in debt cannot get out of this quagmire of indebtedness because of his incapacity in earning cash, especially, because cash crops are not grown extensively. There are not many urban areas within this district and it is perhaps for this reason that an enquiry into the nature and extent of indebtedness has not been instituted. It can, however, be imagined that whatever indebtedness exists in the small urban pockets is mainly, though not entirely, to the same causes as have been mentioned in respect of the agriculturists. The additional factors may be the requirement of money for business purposes or for maintaining comparatively a better standard of living and expenditure on available facilities of education and medicine.

After the formation of Himachal Pradesh, the new regime, in order to protect the indebted persons in general and the cultivators in particular, extended to this district, the *Redemption of Mortgaged Land Act* and the *Restitution of Mortgaged Land Act*. In the year 1953 an important legislation known as the *Himachal Pradesh Debt Redemption Act* was legislated and was subsequently also enforced in Bilaspur. All these acts, have to some extent checked, if not reduced, the evil of indebtedness.

### **Role of private money-lenders**

The money-lenders have been playing, and, to some extent still play, a very important part in the agricultural economy of the district and are more often than not, indispensable. The credit facilities provided by the Government are good as far as they go but these are yet in their infancy stage and so long as the education has not enlightened the people, and co-operative movement has not taken firm roots, this class of money-lenders would continue to survive, although with diminishing force of grip.

These money-lenders advanced loans to the people, mostly to the cultivators, on varying rates of interests, generally against pawn of property or ornaments. For some time now their role and importance are decreasing because of the various schemes of advancing loans started by the Government and the coming into the field, of the State Co-operative Bank. The various loans are advanced for the construction of houses, purchase of bullocks, improved seeds, fertilizers, improved agricultural implements, terracing of land, laying of orchards etc. There are neither any joint stock bank nor any loan and investment company.

### **Co-operative societies**

The co-operative movement was first introduced in the area, happily coinciding with the commencement of the First Five Year Plan during which the All India Co-operative Planning Committee recommended that in order to raise the standard of living of their members, co-operatives should not only provide credit but also undertake in large measure, other activities like supply of seeds, manures, agricultural implements and domestic requirements, etc. and, to this end in view recommended re-organisation of co-operative societies to enable them to undertake all these activities along with their basic function of money-lending. Full advantage appears to have been taken of this recommendation while establishing co-operative societies in the Bilaspur area inasmuch as there came to be organised ten primary non-agricultural multipurpose societies and four primary agricultural multipurpose societies out of a total number of eighteen societies existing during 1952-53 in the area. The number of primary agricultural thrift and credit societies remained quite low, being three during the same period with a total number of forty members, share capital of three hundred and sixty rupees and working capital of four hundred rupees. The number of thrift and credit societies though increased to five in the following year with no increase in the membership and very little increase in the share and working capital yet it declined to two in 1954-55 and to one in 1955-56 whereafter none of the thrift and credit societies remained in existence till 1959-60 when a society came into being. Another society was established

in 1965-66 but was closed the very year because in accordance with the policy decision the thrift and credit societies were converted into multi-purpose societies in order to expand their sphere of activities. The following table will substantiate this version with regard to thrift and credit societies.

| Year    | No. of societies | No. of members | Share capital<br>Rs. | Working capital<br>Rs. |
|---------|------------------|----------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| 1952-53 | 3                | 40             | 360                  | 400                    |
| 1953-54 | 5                | 40             | 400                  | 423                    |
| 1954-55 | 2                | 19             | 20                   | 20                     |
| 1955-56 | 1                | 2              | —                    | —                      |
| 1956-57 | —                | —              | —                    | —                      |
| 1957-58 | —                | —              | —                    | —                      |
| 1958-59 | —                | —              | —                    | —                      |
| 1959-60 | 1                | —              | —                    | —                      |
| 1960-61 | 1                | 23             | 445                  | 468                    |
| 1961-62 | 1                | 14             | 200                  | 223                    |
| 1962-63 | 1                | 14             | 200                  | 200                    |
| 1963-64 | 1                | 5              | 90                   | 90                     |
| 1964-65 | 1                | 2              | 40                   | 40                     |
| 1965-66 | 2                | 26             | 595                  | 4,575                  |
| 1966-67 | 1                | 31             | 855                  | 4,758                  |
| 1967-68 | 1                | 38             | 935                  | 4,446                  |
| 1968-69 | 1                | 36             | 1,240                | 7,279                  |
| 1969-70 | 1                | 38             | 1,290                | 7,809                  |
| 1970-71 | 1                | 44             | 1,510                | 7,833                  |
| 1971-72 | 1                | 37             | 1,460                | 5,524                  |



|         |   |    |       |       |
|---------|---|----|-------|-------|
| 1972-73 | 1 | 46 | 1,585 | 7,955 |
| 1973-74 | 1 | 35 | 1,545 | 7,722 |

### Multi-purpose co-operative societies

As the trend of co-operative movement came to be directed from single purpose towards multi-purpose the number of primary agricultural multi-purpose and primary non-agricultural multipurpose societies, being fourteen in 1952-53, increased to forty three in 1967-68 whereafter these societies came to a close. It was felt that co-operative societies working in rural area should devote their attention for the amelioration of agriculture being the cardinal occupation of rural population. It was emphasized that co-operatives in rural area should supply agricultural inputs and other consumer requirements to the people along with finance. In view of this the societies were converted into agricultural service co-operative societies from multi-purpose or thrift and credit. The subjoined table will serve to give an idea about their growth in membership, share capital and working capital.

| Year    | No. of societies | No. of members | Share capital<br>(In lakhs of rupees) | Working capital |
|---------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1952-53 | 14               | 166            | 0.03                                  | 0.03            |
| 1953-54 | 17               | 129            | 0.15                                  | 0.15            |
| 1954-55 | 20               | 387            | 0.19                                  | 0.27            |
| 1955-56 | 39               | 1,320          | 0.34                                  | 0.83            |
| 1956-57 | 42               | 2,086          | 0.47                                  | 1.46            |
| 1957-58 | 43               | 2,891          | 0.58                                  | 1.83            |
| 1958-59 | 43               | 4,407          | 0.01                                  | 2.57            |
| 1959-60 | 51               | 6,718          | 1.28                                  | 3.77            |
| 1960-61 | 51               | 6,547          | 1.37                                  | 3.92            |
| 1961-62 | 51               | 6,883          | 1.58                                  | 3.47            |
| 1962-63 | 48               | 6,872          | 1.69                                  | 3.74            |

|         |    |       |      |      |
|---------|----|-------|------|------|
| 1963-64 | 48 | 7,191 | 1.86 | 4.31 |
| 1964-65 | 46 | 7,092 | 1.84 | 4.20 |
| 1965-66 | 44 | 7,231 | 1.83 | 4.65 |
| 1966-67 | 43 | 8,139 | 1.93 | 4.75 |
| 1967-68 | 43 | 9,456 | 2.21 | 5.84 |

### Industrial societies

An industrial co-operative society came to be established in 1953-54 but was extinct during 1954-55 due to lack of business prudence and technical guidance. In the succeeding year of 1955-56 an industrial co-operative society was again organised which continued to function in the following year also. In 1957-58 one more co-operative society was added and still another during 1958-59. The succeeding years have witnessed a gradual increase in the number of this class of co-operatives which augurs well with the trend of times in which industrialisation is of great importance. The succeeding statistical table illustrates the position of this class of societies.

| Year    | No. of Societies | No. of members | Share capital<br>(in lakhs) | Working capital |
|---------|------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| 1953-54 | 1                | 7              | 380                         | 380             |
| 1954-55 | —                | —              | —                           | —               |
| 1955-56 | 1                | 15             | —                           | —               |
| 1956-57 | 1                | 15             | —                           | —               |
| 1957-58 | 2                | 35             | 0.02                        | 0.09            |
| 1958-59 | 3                | 57             | 0.08                        | 0.32            |
| 1959-60 | 5                | 116            | 0.10                        | 0.36            |
| 1960-61 | 7                | 165            | 0.11                        | 0.45            |
| 1961-62 | 8                | 181            | 0.12                        | 0.35            |
| 1962-63 | 9                | 231            | 0.13                        | 0.35            |

|         |    |     |      |      |
|---------|----|-----|------|------|
| 1963-64 | 9  | 261 | 0.08 | 0.20 |
| 1964-65 | 10 | 302 | 0.10 | 0.20 |
| 1965-66 | 11 | 349 | 0.10 | 0.28 |
| 1966-67 | 11 | 366 | 0.11 | 0.32 |
| 1967-68 | 8  | 280 | 0.09 | 0.32 |
| 1968-69 | 6  | 330 | 0.17 | 0.61 |
| 1969-70 | 6  | 360 | 0.25 | 1.03 |
| 1970-71 | 6  | 373 | 0.25 | 1.28 |
| 1971-72 | 9  | 512 | 0.39 | 1.52 |
| 1972-73 | 9  | 554 | 0.65 | 1.99 |
| 1973-74 | 10 | 559 | 1.02 | 2.20 |

#### Labour and construction society

This society was organised during the year 1955-56 to foster co-operative ideology among the working and artisans classes. For the last about seven years of its existence the working of this society came to a stand-still and ultimately in the year 1968 this society was done away with because of heavy losses suffered by it while executing P. W. D. works. The following table will give an idea about the strength of its members and capital.

| Year    | No. of societies | No. of members | Share capital<br>(in lakhs) | Working capital |
|---------|------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| 1955-56 | 1                | 345            | 0.03                        | 0.25            |
| 1956-57 | 1                | 436            | 0.04                        | 0.30            |
| 1957-58 | 1                | 357            | 0.03                        | 0.20            |
| 1958-59 | 1                | 347            | 0.04                        | 0.28            |
| 1959-60 | 1                | 347            | 0.04                        | 0.19            |
| 1960-61 | 1                | 347            | 0.03                        | 0.45            |
| 1961-62 | 1                | 347            | 0.03                        | 0.19            |

|         |   |     |      |      |
|---------|---|-----|------|------|
| 1962-63 | 1 | 347 | 0.03 | 0.19 |
| 1963-64 | 1 | 347 | 0.03 | 0.19 |
| 1964-65 | 1 | 347 | 0.03 | 0.18 |
| 1965-66 | 1 | 347 | 0.03 | 0.19 |
| 1966-67 | 1 | 347 | 0.03 | 0.19 |
| 1967-68 | 1 | 347 | 0.03 | 0.19 |

**Service co-operative society :** Consequent upon the 1958 resolution of the National Development Council and recommendations of the working group, Service Co-operatives were organised on the basis of Village community as primary units. To start with seventeen service co-operative societies were registered during the year 1959-60, in the district. Gradual increase in the number, membership, share capital and working capital in the following years is evident from the sub-joined table.

| Year    | No. of societies | No. of members | (In lakhs of rupees) |                 |
|---------|------------------|----------------|----------------------|-----------------|
|         |                  |                | Share capital        | Working capital |
| 1959-60 | 17               | 669            | 0.09                 | 0.11            |
| 1960-61 | 23               | 1,172          | 0.13                 | 0.20            |
| 1961-62 | 25               | 1,192          | 0.16                 | 0.23            |
| 1962-63 | 27               | 1,410          | 0.20                 | 0.32            |
| 1963-64 | 31               | 1,896          | 0.27                 | 0.38            |
| 1964-65 | 35               | 2,949          | 0.52                 | 0.78            |
| 1965-66 | 38               | 3,517          | 0.69                 | 1.12            |
| 1966-67 | 39               | 4,461          | 1.01                 | 1.79            |
| 1967-68 | 38               | 6,096          | 1.36                 | 2.60            |
| 1968-69 | 81               | 17,801         | 4.17                 | 18.53           |
| 1969-70 | 82               | 18,466         | 4.66                 | 18.97           |

|         |    |        |      |       |
|---------|----|--------|------|-------|
| 1970-71 | 79 | 18,480 | 4.98 | 19.23 |
| 1971-72 | 79 | 19,023 | 5.39 | 19.43 |
| 1972-73 | 81 | 20,489 | 3.89 | 20.95 |
| 1973-74 | 83 | 22,896 | 6.29 | 20.95 |

**Non-agricultural poultry farming societies :** A society was organised during 1961-62. It had, to start with, fourteen members and the share capital was four hundred and sixty rupees only. In the subsequent years the number of societies rose to four, with fifty members, Rs. 2,310 as share capital and Rs. 2,760 as working capital. All these societies were placed under liquidation during 1967-68. Lack of technical knowledge of rearing birds, lack of funds and improper and unbalanced feed to the birds are some of the main reasons of failure of such type of societies.

**Ghamarwin Tahsil Union :** There is only one tahsil union, namely, the Ghamarwin Tahsil Co-operative Marketing and Supply Union, registered during the year 1960-61 to make necessary arrangements for the marketing of agricultural produce of the tahsil as well as for the supply of consumer goods and agricultural requisites to its member societies. The following table will give an idea about the working of this union.

(In lakhs of rupees)

| Year    | Membership | Share capital | Working capital | Sales | Purchases |
|---------|------------|---------------|-----------------|-------|-----------|
| 1962-63 | 24         | 0.11          | —               | —     | —         |
| 1963-64 | 24         | 0.11          | 0.34            | 4.81  | 5.34      |
| 1964-65 | 24         | 0.11          | 0.37            | 3.57  | 3.20      |
| 1965-66 | 24         | 0.11          | 0.39            | 2.37  | 2.28      |
| 1966-67 | 24         | 0.11          | 0.31            | 3.78  | 3.68      |
| 1967-68 | 29         | 0.11          | 0.43            | 10.24 | 10.21     |
| 1968-69 | 32         | 0.10          | 0.78            | 3.14  | 3.32      |
| 1969-70 | 32         | 0.10          | 0.47            | 2.72  | 2.26      |

|         |    |      |      |      |      |
|---------|----|------|------|------|------|
| 1970-71 | 32 | 0.10 | 0.54 | 3.31 | 3.57 |
| 1971-72 | 32 | 0.10 | 0.44 | 0.27 | 0.17 |
| 1972-73 | 32 | 0.10 | 0.45 | —    | —    |
| 1973-74 | 32 | 0.10 | 0.46 | —    | —    |

**District federation :** The federation was registered in 1956, with a membership of ten and a share capital of one thousand rupees. The aim of the federation was to work as a Central Co-operative Marketing Agency. But since its inception the federation has been dealing mainly in the sale and purchase business. The main items it deals with are iron and steel, kerosene oil, Mandi rock-salt, sugar, foodgrains, *pan* salt, skimmed milk etc. An idea about the functioning of the federation during its existence may be had from the following table.

(In lac of rupees)

| Year    | Membership | Share capital | Working capital |
|---------|------------|---------------|-----------------|
| 1955-56 | 10         | 0.01          | 0.03            |
| 1956-57 | 28         | 0.05          | 0.66            |
| 1957-58 | 40         | 0.08          | 1.02            |
| 1958-59 | 42         | 0.10          | 2.57            |
| 1959-60 | 64         | 0.40          | 3.00            |
| 1960-61 | 66         | 0.40          | 2.74            |
| 1961-62 | 67         | 0.40          | 1.17            |
| 1962-63 | 67         | 0.40          | 1.01            |
| 1963-64 | 67         | 0.40          | 2.39            |
| 1964-65 | 71         | 0.40          | 2.57            |
| 1965-66 | 74         | 0.40          | 4.34            |
| 1966-67 | 76         | 0.40          | 3.93            |

|         |    |      |      |
|---------|----|------|------|
| 1967-68 | 76 | 0.40 | 3.25 |
| 1968-69 | 76 | 0.36 | 4.26 |
| 1969-70 | 79 | 0.55 | 4.18 |
| 1970-71 | 75 | 0.50 | 3.50 |
| 1971-72 | 77 | 0.48 | 4.34 |
| 1972-73 | 80 | 0.77 | 4.92 |
| 1973-74 | 90 | 1.09 | 5.78 |

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### BANKS

A branch of the Himachal Pradesh State Co-operative Bank is functioning since December 12, 1956 at Bilaspur proper and another at Ghamarwin since 20th February 1963 and a considerable relief is being experienced by the co-operative societies of the district. Prior to their establishment the local co-operative societies had to resort to the head office of the bank located at Simla which involved a lot of delay and difficulties. These branches have been financing trade and credit activities undertaken by the societies, and they also have been rendering useful service to the people of Bilaspur by providing banking facilities.

Besides the Himachal Pradesh State Co-operative Bank there are branches of the State Bank of India at New Bilaspur Township, the United Commercial Bank at Bilaspur and Ghamarwin and the New Bank of India at Bilaspur. There are also pay offices of the State Bank of India at Naina Devi and the Bank of Patiala at Bharari.

### INSURANCE

Prior to the Nationalisation of life insurance, in September 1956, it appears that very little business of insurance [was done in the district by a few field workers, of various insurance companies, who might visit the area off and on in search of some business. There has never been any branch office, permanent or temporary, of any insurance company located within the district and the insurance was primarily confined to the life insurance only to the exclusion, to a large extent of the general insurance. On September 1, 1956, following the nationalisation of the life insurance all over the country, the Life Insurance Corporation of India came into existence. Thenceonward it appears, the insurance business increased year after year within the Bilaspur district also. For purposes of attracting and management of insurance business, the Bilaspur district is attached to the

branch of the Life Insurance Corporation with headquarters at Mandi and a Development Officer with headquarters at Bilaspur is conducting the insurance business within the district. The Corporation has rendered service to about 20,000 policy holders and it completed business of 141 lakh in the year 1972-73.

### STATE ASSISTANCE TO INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Prior to the merger of erstwhile Bilaspur State, it is said, by way of solitary instance, that a local blacksmith was granted some assistance by the then State in order to improve his work. This instance gives us an idea that during the past, the local administration was less interested in and least disposed of towards the promotion of industry in the area. This is not surprising in view of the general backward state of economy in the hills. The inevitable result has been that almost the entire population has been dependent for subsistence on agriculture. After the merger of Bilaspur into Himachal Pradesh, Five Year Plans had come to stay in which great importance was attached to the industrial progress. In order to attain a high degree of achievement in the industrial sector the State came forward to encourage the local entrepreneurs, to revive the old and decaying industries, to reorganise and establish the existing and modern industries not merely by preaching with word of mouth but by extending concrete assistance. Many a training-cum-production centres, in various crafts were started within the district in order to attract and train the local artisans. A follow up system was also introduced under which the trainees after completion of their training period were required to report to the District Industries Officer about their activities at the end of each month. The trainees, during the period of their training of one year, are granted stipends.

Lack of finance is one of the serious bottlenecks in the development of local industries. To remove this hurdle the Government has been granting loans, with considerable liberality to such private industries which are in need of capital. This financial assistance is extended under the *Punjab State Aid to Industries Act, 1935* as applied to Himachal Pradesh. The loans are granted at low rate of interest and are repayable, with interest, ordinarily within seven years if the amount of loan does not exceed five thousand rupees. Since the application of this Act the following amount of loans have been advanced to the local industrialists and craftsmen.



| Year    | Amount advanced<br>(in rupees) |
|---------|--------------------------------|
| 1960    | 29,200                         |
| 1960-61 | 19,700                         |
| 1961-62 | 29,000                         |
| 1962-63 | 55,700                         |
| 1963-64 | 50,000                         |
| 1964-65 | 95,100                         |
| 1965-66 | 1,00,000                       |
| 1966-67 | 50,000                         |
| 1967-68 | 1,10,000                       |
| 1968-69 | 1,40,000                       |
| 1969-70 | 1,10,000                       |
| 1970-71 | 1,04,500                       |
| 1971-72 | 1,00,000                       |

Industrial products are of little value so long as proper marketing facilities are not available ensuring reasonable return to the producers. To tide over the marketing difficulties the Government started a sales-shop at Bilaspur in 1960-61. There is also an emporium at Simla, available for making arrangements for the sale of goods produced by local craftsmen. The Co-operative Department has also, since 1958-59, created a separate marketing section to help the producers in the disposal of their products. Thus it will be seen that the State extends assistance to the industries in the matter of finance, technology and marketing. Another great assistance to the industries being extended by the State, although indirectly, is the expansion and development of roads and other means of communication as also the procurement of electric power by taking electricity to various parts of the district. With the passage of time the impact of these developments will become more and more prominent. It is also one of the endeavours of the

Government to procure or make available, as far as possible, raw material to forest-based, agro-based, mineral-based and miscellaneous industries.

### CURRENCY AND COINAGE

There is no iota of evidence to shed light on the old currency system of the tract. The erstwhile Bilaspur State would seem to be too small to adopt its own system of currency and coinage for the local people. Moreover the area was so remote from the centres of civilization that a negligible want only would have been felt for the currency or coinage because there were very little trade and commerce activities. For the satisfaction of local demands in the various spheres of day to day activities the people must have resorted to barter system exchanging goods for goods and services for services and *vice versa*. This can be inferred from various traditional customs of payment in vogue even today in the rural areas. Again the existence of barter system is supported by the fact that upto quite recent times, even the land revenue was paid by the cultivators, to the State, in kind to the exclusion of cash. Whatever little number of coinage would have found its way to the Bilaspur tract, must have been, it may be imagined, the currency of the contemporary king of Delhi who could afford to put into circulation his currency. This condition must have continued upto the advent of English in the hills, by about the middle of the nineteenth century. The British regime, as is so well known, adopted a common currency and coinage system for the entire country consisting of coins, namely, one rupee, half rupee (eight annas) quarter rupee (four annas), two anna piece, one anna piece, two pice piece and so on. These coins were made of alloy of silver, nickle, brass and copper. Side by side the British regime introduced also the paper currency with promissory notes of various denominations. With minor variation in this currency system it continued to be in force much even after the attainment of Independence in 1947 and later until decimal coinage system was introduced. It is said that in view of its advantages, attempts were made even prior to Independence, to decimalize coinage system. An amendment was effected in the *Indian Coinage Act* by virtue of the *Indian Coinage (Amendment) Act, 1955* which divided a rupee into hundred units instead of then existing sixty-four units. This *Act* was promulgated with effect from April, 1957, and the new unit of currency was given the name of *naya paisa*. According to the provision of the *Act* the new coins as are in existence today were brought to use. While the old rupee coins had a weight of one *tola* (12.5 gr) the new rupee coin weight is ten grams. For sometime the old coins continued to be in circulation alongwith the new coins but as the time rolled by old coins began to be increasingly withdrawn leaving the field entirely to the new coins. The paper currency with various denominations, similarly continues with the change that these are now the notes of Free India and as such the head of the king of England has been replaced by the Ashoka Pillar.

## TRADE AND COMMERCE

### Course of trade

Trade and transport are inextricably inter-dependent. The latter is in turn dependent on developed means of communication. There was lack of both in Bilaspur in the past and, therefore, trade was insignificant and commercial activities were limited in scope and extent. Bilaspur, as a redeeming feature was however, ideally located on the borders of the two distinct geographical regions-mountains and plains, that has been a source of some income to the local people from certain amount of commercial activities that went on despite aforementioned handicaps. Within the boundaries of Bilaspur, minor commercial and trade activities were conducted, between the villages, on the one hand, and the Bilaspur town on the other. As regards trade activities with areas outside the State, before the trade channels were directed south-east with the opening of Simla-Kalka route, the main high-road into the hills passed through Bilaspur proper and most of the hill territory, forming the basin of the Satluj, used to procure their necessities from the plains through some trading concerns of the Bilaspur State. This was, it is said, possible due to the political relationship of the small autonomous Himalayan principalities under the over all paramountcy of the British power. The main trade routes were only two. One came from Rupar and continued through Swarghat to Bilaspur and thence onward it led to Suket and Mandi. The other started from Nadaun, in the Hamirpur district, to Bilaspur and ran onward to Simla. Both these routes converged at the capital town, Bilaspur, proving beneficial for the prosperity of the local people. Though the Satluj has been flowing through the area down the ages but no trade or commerce activities were carried through its course till the recent past. This is due for two reasons, namely, that the local demand of consumer goods was not much and also that the local production was apparently not so much in scale as would necessitate export which may be carried through the river transport. Scientific exploitation of forest produce was also little known in the olden days. Whatever little import and export was necessary, was carried through the land routes comprising the roads mentioned above.

### IMPORT AND EXPORT

The land revenue settlement report drawn in 1913 mentions that in the first decade of this century Bilaspur had no special trade of any kind, and therefore, there was no big market. The foodgrains and other exportable agricultural products were brought to and sold in the Bilaspur town to the shopkeepers, by the predominantly large number of local inhabitants. The agricultural produce of certain areas lying on the fringes of the State were

taken and sold in markets lying outside the State. The local merchants also took foodgrains from Bilaspur to Rupar. In 1905 a ban was imposed on the export of foodgrains to the plains which, it appears, continued in force for sometime. Since the scientific exploitation of forests, the forest produce has also figured among the exports. The principal marketable and exportable products of the forests, have been as they still continue to be *chir* timber, bamboos, and *bhabhar* grass. Two more items of great significance find place in the exportable products, namely, the fish being propagated in the Gobind Sagar and rosin and turpentine being produced in the Rosin and Turpentine Factory located at Bilaspur.

### Trade Centres

#### Regulated markets

It has already been stated that trade and commerce activities in this district are on a small-scale and there are practically very few markets. With this consideration, among others, the then State administration started a semi-State organisation under the name of Bilaspur Commercial Corporation in the year 1945. Subsequently in 1948, it was changed into a Statutory Commercial Corporation under the *Bilaspur Commercial Corporation Act of 2006 BK*. This Corporation was inherited, after the merger of States, by the successor part 'C' State of Bilaspur and was placed under the management of the Civil Supplies Department. The Corporation was advanced, by way of assistance, a loan of two-and-a-half lakhs of rupees on December 19, 1948, and again a loan of five lakhs of rupees on February 5, 1952, by the Ministry of States. With the lifting of control on foodgrains and other articles of consumption as also on the merger of the Bilaspur part 'C' State into Himachal Pradesh in 1954 the Corporation came to an end.

To provide for the better regulation of the purchase and sale of agricultural produce and the establishment of markets for agricultural produce the *Patiala Agricultural Produce Marketing Act 2004 BK*. (*Act No. 14 of 2004 BK*) has been, to start with, extended to Himachal Pradesh with effect from November 8, 1960, and the same has come into force on April 1, 1961. Effects of implementation of this Act have not yet made themselves felt in any big way.

**Centres of wholesale business :** Some wholesale business is done in Bilaspur town by traditional businessmen. The District Co-operative Federation, Bilaspur is also dealing in wholesale business; since its establishment in the year 1955-56 it has been mainly handling Mandi rock-salt, soft coke, foodgrains, cloth, charcoal, flour, kerosene oil, sugar,

fertilizers, gur, dust coal, building material, agricultural implements and, miscellaneous sales. It has been mainly supplying these commodities to the various local primary co-operative societies for further sale to the consumers. The following table shows the extent of business transacted by the Federation.

| Years   | Value of purchase | Value of sale |
|---------|-------------------|---------------|
| 1956-57 | Rs. 63,386        | Rs. 48,666    |
| 1957-58 | Rs. 82,910        | Rs. 81,558    |
| 1958-59 | Rs. 2,19,929      | Rs. 1,76,062  |
| 1959-60 | Rs. 5,13,137      | Rs. 5,26,373  |
| 1960-61 | Rs. 4,95,382      | Rs. 5,42,054  |
| 1961-62 | Rs. 3,62,783      | Rs. 3,68,131  |
| 1962-63 | Rs. 3,92,840      | Rs. 3,83,797  |
| 1963-64 | Rs. 12,47,544     | Rs. 11,86,356 |
| 1964-65 | Rs. 14,53,251     | Rs. 14,64,004 |
| 1965-66 | Rs. 14,49,512     | Rs. 13,24,364 |
| 1966-67 | Rs. 17,61,541     | Rs. 18,51,359 |
| 1967-68 | Rs. 14,40,650     | Rs. 13,83,510 |
| 1968-69 | Rs. 11,93,337     | Rs. 12,09,249 |
| 1969-70 | Rs. 17,04,093     | Rs. 17,99,502 |
| 1970-71 | Rs. 18,64,699     | Rs. 20,19,244 |
| 1971-72 | Rs. 19,71,340     | Rs. 18,44,378 |

The District Co-operative Federation has also worked as Government agent in the business of foodgrains. Total turn-over of wholesale business by the Federation and other dealers at Bilaspur is estimated at twenty lakh rupees per year.

**Retail marketing centres :** There are only two main retail marketing centres namely, Bilaspur and Ghamarwin, the latter being of lesser significance. Co-operative movement in the Bilaspur district began to function in the real sense from the year 1955-56, and the multipurpose societies were organised to discharge the dual functions of credit and trade. Since their inception, these multi-purpose societies have been handling the retail business of commodities including salt, kerosene oil, cotton seeds, mustard oil, oil cakes, foodgrains, *gur*, cloth, cigarettes, potatoes, onions, sugar, vegetable oils, cement, uniforms, Sambhar salt, ginger, fertilizer, iron, leather, iron sheets, slates, *kariana* and molasses. The District Co-operative Federation supplied consumers goods to these societies and the societies have been catering to the needs of the public. The volume of business conducted by such societies is given in the following table.

| Year    | Value of purchase | Value of sale |
|---------|-------------------|---------------|
| 1955-56 | 75,080            | 59,305        |
| 1956-57 | 67,365            | 61,395        |
| 1957-58 | 1,47,889          | 1,85,048      |
| 1958-59 | 3,87,605          | 3,84,275      |
| 1959-60 | 6,47,261          | 6,54,173      |
| 1960-61 | 5,56,740          | 5,58,923      |
| 1961-62 | 3,79,569          | 3,77,854      |
| 1962-63 | 3,23,084          | 3,40,626      |
| 1963-64 | 9,52,227          | 9,42,408      |
| 1964-65 | 12,12,998         | 12,42,002     |
| 1965-66 | 15,12,446         | 13,97,734     |
| 1966-67 | 18,09,844         | 18,63,941     |
| 1967-68 | 34,77,454         | 32,57,282     |
| 1968-69 | 15,51,009         | 15,52,298     |
| 1969-70 | 22,19,508         | 22,42,750     |

|         |           |           |
|---------|-----------|-----------|
| 1970-71 | 19,42,113 | 20,11,073 |
| 1971-72 | 19,29,501 | 19,74,791 |

**Fairs, melas and other rural marketing centres :** Apart from the permanent marketing centres mentioned above a number of fairs are held such as Naina Devi fair, Markand fair, Guga fair at Gherwin, Chakrana fair, Bharnot fair, Hari Devi fair, *Baisakhi* fair at Hatwar tahsil Ghamarwin, Bada Dev fair, Jhal fair, Morsingi fair, Bheanoo Pir fair, Bhel fair, Guga Naumi fair at Nagraon, the Nalwari fair at Bilaspur where some trade takes place. Among these fairs, the Nalwari fair is important from business point of view. It is held in the month of March and lasts for eight days. Approximate attendance during the fair is between ten thousand and fifteen thousand. People bring cattle to the fair for sale from the various parts of the district and a brisk trade takes place. Generally marketing in hills is difficult. The geographical situation of this district; the rugged and inaccessible nature of the country, shut in by mountains and cut up by deep water courses, make communication very difficult. Daily marketing under such circumstances is almost impossible, and hence the need is felt for periodical commercial gatherings at convenient centres, where the exchange and sale of commodities may be effected. This need has, among other things, given rise to the periodical fairs.

At Shri Naina Devi Ji three fairs are held every year. First fair is held for nine days in the month of March/April, second fair for ten days in July and the third fair for nine days in September/October when about fifteen thousand, forty thousand and twenty thousand devotees respectively, from various walks of life congregate to receive the blessings of the Devi.

Markanda fair takes place at Makri for three days in the month of April in which about four thousand people assemble to take a dip in the holy water.

A fair known as Gugga fair is held at Gherwin for eight days in which about four to five thousand people gather.

All these fairs are not trade fairs but considerable business takes place in haberdashery, small utensils, sweetmeats etc.

**Co-operative in wholesale and retail trade :** The number of wholesale and retail dealers is negligible in the district. The District Co-operative

Federation deals in wholesale business while the co-operative multi-purpose societies are dealing with retail trade in various consumer goods. The District Co-operative Federation Bilaspur supplies consumer goods to primary co-operative societies of the district for further sale to the consumers and thus there exists a link between wholesale and retail business. Some co-operation, to promote the trade and commerce, exists also between individual wholesale dealers and retail dealers. This co-operation springs up from mutual advantage and convenience. The retailers, generally plying their trade in the remoter parts of the district are of comparatively little financial standing to afford wholesale purchase and cover wholesale marketing of commodities accumulated with them.

**State trading :** There is no state trading corporation or body. The government, however, figures prominently in the controlled items from time to time, such as, trade of sugar and foodgrains under the supervision of its Civil Supplies Department, and sold to the public on the fair price shops located at various places in the district.

### MERCHANT AND CONSUMER ASSOCIATIONS AND LABOUR ORGANISATIONS

Two *beopar mandals* were organised in 1972 and are working at present at Bilaspur. The modern era of science and technology has witnessed radio, a very powerful organ for dissemination of trade news in a much less time than is ordinarily required in establishing contacts with the producers, consumers and traders. Through radio, rates of various commercial commodities, prevailing at important centres, within and outside the district, are broadcast from the All India Radio, Simla and all concerned get their cue as to when to sell and buy. Second potent medium of dissemination of trade news is the newspapers, though not many in circulation, that carry information relating to trends, rise and fall of prices of important markets in the country and help producers, consumers and traders to frame their policy relating to prices. The agricultural marketing section, Himachal Pradesh, brings out a monthly bulletin on market containing information on wholesale prices. It also indicates weather and crop conditions, rainfall and snow fall. This monthly publication is circulated in almost all the offices in Himachal Pradesh. The Director of Economics and Statistics, Himachal Pradesh, in consultation with the Agricultural Marketing Officer, publishes a fortnightly bulletin of wholesale prices of important commodities, average of weekly prices pertaining to the intervening Fridays at selected centres in Himachal Pradesh, the weighted index numbers of wholesale prices in respect of principal agricultural



commodities grown in the Pradesh and the retail prices of certain selected commodities.

## WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

### Weights

There is no reliable evidence to show what system of weights and measures was prevalent in this area in the more distant past. Since the trade and commerce was at its lowest and transactions were few and far between, no standard weights and measures were in use, is highly probable. Nevertheless for mutual dealings, it appears, certain crude and primitive weights and measures must have been devised by the people. Enquiries made from the local people reveal that the old indigenous weights with certain local variations, were made of stone in whole of the area. Later, and most probably, when the Mohammedan rule was on the ascendency, these indigenous weights would seem to have come to be called as *kham* or *kachcha* weights. These indigenous, *kham* or *kachcha* weights, continued to be in use in many parts, and were related to the standard weights of the British period in the manner detailed below.

|  |  |
|--|--|
| 1 <i>kachcha pao</i>                                 | $1\frac{1}{2}$ <i>pukka chhatak</i>                                |
| 2 <i>kachcha seer</i>                                | 6 <i>pukka chhataks</i>  |
| $2\frac{1}{2}$ <i>kachcha seers</i>                  | 1 <i>pukka seer</i> or 80 <i>tolas</i> or 16 <i>pukka chhataks</i> |
| 5 <i>kachcha seers</i><br>( <i>pansera</i> )         | 2 <i>pukka seers</i>   |
| 10 <i>kachcha seers</i><br>( <i>dussera</i> )        | 4 <i>pukka seers</i>   |
| 40 <i>kachcha seers</i> or<br>1 <i>kachcha maund</i> | 16 <i>pukka seers</i>  |
| $2\frac{1}{2}$ <i>kachcha maunds</i>                 | 1 <i>maund</i> or 40 <i>pukka seers</i> .                          |

As the time passed more and more standard or *pukka* units of weights came to be used. The recognised units of standard weights were as follows :—

|                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| 8 <i>rattis</i>  | 1 <i>masha</i> |
| 12 <i>mashas</i> | 1 <i>tola</i>  |

|                                     |                          |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 5 tolas                             | 1 <i>chhatak</i>         |
| 2 <i>chhataks</i>                   | $\frac{1}{2}$ <i>pao</i> |
| 4 <i>chhataks</i>                   | 1 <i>pao</i>             |
| 8 <i>chhataks</i> or 2 <i>paos</i>  | $\frac{1}{2}$ seer       |
| 16 <i>chhataks</i> or 4 <i>paos</i> | 1 seer                   |
| 5 seers                             | 1 <i>pansera</i>         |
| 5 seers or 2 <i>panseras</i>        | 1 <i>dhara</i>           |
| 20 seers or 2 <i>dharas</i>         | $\frac{1}{2}$ maund      |
| 40 seers or 4 <i>dharas</i>         | 1 maund                  |

After the attainment of Independence the Government of India, with a view to bringing uniformity in the system of weights and measures throughout the country resolved to adopt the metric system. Consequently the *Rajasthan Weights and Measures (Enforcement) Act, 1958* was extended to the Union Territory of Himachal Pradesh by the Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs for the application and use of metric weights and measures. The *Act* was extended to Bilaspur district on April 1, 1960.

Prior to 1863 the prevalent grain measure was *patha*. A *patha* could contain paddy and *ragi* equal to three kachcha seers which in turn were equal to one seer and three *chhataks*; wheat, maize or *mash* equal to four kachcha seers that is equal to one seer and nine *chhataks*. Another smaller *patha* locally called *buhari* could contain two kachcha seers of wheat. Still smaller *patha* locally known as *thakri* could contain one kachcha seer of wheat.

The land was measured in terms of its capacity of seed with which it could be sown. For instance the land in which two kachcha seers of wheat was sown was called *pathiao* and the land in which twenty *pathas* of wheat were sown was called *lakhao*. One *lakhao* was equal to eight *kanals* or one *ghumao*. According to the survey of 1907 settlement one *patha* land was reckoned equal to  $3\frac{1}{2}$  *biswas* and one *lakhao* or *ghumao* equal to seventy-two *biswas* or three *bighas* and twelve *biswas*. One acre was equal to 5.38 *bighas*. At present the unit of length is the *karam* and the unit of area is a square *karam* which in this district is equal to fifty-four inches. In the case of the local *bigha* measure this unit is called a *biswansi*.

Perhaps a finger was the basic unit. Three fingers put together, side by side, were equal to a *girah*. Four *girahs* made a span or *balisht*. Two

spans were equal to a cubit or *hath*. Two cubits were reckoned as a yard or *gaz*. Distance was stated in terms of *kos* of which there was no standard length. During the British period inch, foot, yard, furlong and mile were the units of length. The system of measures, alongwith the system of weights, is being revolutionised and standardised by switching over to the metric system. The new length measures were introduced in this district with effect from October 1, 1962 where after old length measures have been declared as illegal.

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# Chapter VII

## COMMUNICATIONS

It has been aptly remarked that, "All progress starts with roads—they lead and civilization follows". The means of communication and transport in the past were extremely primitive and the necessity for their development was hardly ever felt.

Means of communication then were difficult particularly in the rainy season when the tract became land-locked severing communication with the adjacent hilly or plain areas.

### OLD TIME TRADE ROUTES AND HIGHWAYS AND MODES OF CONVEYANCE

The main trade routes were the two bridle paths, one coming from Rupar in the Punjab and continuing through Swarghat, Bilaspur and ultimately leading to Suket and Mandi, and, the other came from Nadaun in Hamirpur district and ran, via Bilaspur, to Simla. Both these routes converged at Bilaspur, and contributed, to some extent, to its trade and prosperity. Forster, Moorcroft and Vigne were among some of the foreign travellers who pursued their journeys through these older routes. These routes were mostly fit for pedestrians and pack animals like mules etc. Transportation by means of palanquins and sedan chairs etc., was also resorted to.

It appears that during the British regime attention of the ruler was pointedly directed towards the development and maintenance of routes in the territory. In fact, it was one of the conditions of the *Sanad* dated the 21st October, 1847, between the British Government and the then raja of the State, that he (raja) should construct the roads not less than twelve feet (3.1 m) broad in his State, and repair them when necessary. As a result, road transport was reasonably developed, as would appear from an account contained in the *Gazetteer of Bilaspur* published in 1910, which runs as follows :—

"Much has been done of late years to improve communications and there are now 104 miles of road in the State fit for camel transport. Details of these are as follows :—

| Sl. No. | Description                 | No. of miles | Remarks   |
|---------|-----------------------------|--------------|---|
| 1.      | Dehar to Namol.             | 13           | At Dehar is a bridge over the Sutlej, which is crossed by the main road from Kulu through Mandi and Suket. This is a new road which shortens the distance of this bridge from Simla considerably. |
| 2.      | Dehar to Sawarghat.         | 26           | Part of the main road from Kulu to Nalagarh and Rupar. There are rest-houses at Bilaspur (half-way) and Sawarghat.  |
| 3.      | Bilaspur to Namol.          | 13           | Continues on to Arki and Simla from Namol. Rest-house at Namol.   |
| 4.      | Rajpura to Bhajun.          | 17           | Leaves the Bilaspur-Namol road between the 5th and 6th mile-stones, and from Bhajun enters the Baghal State, and eventually reaches Subathu.  |
| 5.      | Brahm Pukhar to Jhanda.     | 2            | A short branch road.  |
| 6.      | Bilaspur to Hari Tiliangar. | 21           | Continues to Hamirpur and Kangra. Sutlej is crossed by a bridge between miles 4 and 5. Rest-house at Ghamarwin, 11th mile.  |
| 7.      | Aur to Talai.               | 17           | Branches off from the preceding road between miles 5 and 6, and goes to Badsar and Kotlehr illaqa of the Kangra District.   |
| 8.      | Naina Devi to Bijai Nagar.  | 5            | A road recently constructed for the convenience of pilgrims going from Anandpur to Naina Devi temple.   |

In addition to the bridges there are thirteen ferries over the Sutlej. Boats are used on eight of them, and inflated skins on the remainder."

The land revenue settlement in the erstwhile Bilaspur State was carried out in about 1933. By that time the position of the roads, as detailed in the report, was as follows :

"There are no metalled roads in the State. There are even no bullock carts to be seen. Goods are carried on donkeys, oxen, mules, ponies, camels and on heads of men. There are the following unmetalled roads of decent widths which serve the 12 parganas of the State :—

- (1) Bilaspur to Sawarghat. Distance 13 miles.
- (2) Rajpura to Bhujjaon, on the Subathu road. Distance 7 miles.
- (3) Bilaspur to Namol, on the Bilaspur-Simla road. Distance 13 miles.
- (4) Namol to Dehar. Distance 13 miles.
- (5) Bilaspur to Dehar on the Bilaspur-Suket-Mandi road. Distance 13 miles.
- (6) Bilaspur to Hari Tiliangar, on the Bilaspur-Hamirpur road. Distance 21 miles.
- (7) Aur to Talai, thence to Badsar in Hamirpur tashsil. Badsar is a village in Hamirpur tahsil but has a police station, a dispensary, a veterinary hospital and a primary school. It is 6 miles from Talai, Aur to Talai being 17 miles.
- (8) Brahm Pukhar to Jhanda. Distance 2 miles.
- (9) Sawarghat to Naina Devi. Distance 12 miles.
- (10) Naina Devi to Toba Kaulan Wala. on the Naina Devi-Anandpur road. Distance 5 miles.

|                  |          |
|------------------|----------|
| Bilaspur-Mandi   | 48 miles |
| Bilaspur-Rupar   | 48 miles |
| Bilaspur-Simla   | 58 miles |
| Bilaspur-Kuthera | 18 miles |

|                  |                  |
|------------------|------------------|
| Bilaspur-Jahu    | 36 miles         |
| Bilaspur-Badsar  | 36 miles         |
| Total distance : | <u>244 miles</u> |

Up to the year 1942-43 further improvements were effected in the main lines of communication, namely, the Swarghat-Nalagarh road, the Bilaspur-Dehar road and the Bilaspur-Ghamarwin road which will be noticed under the account of respective roads in the following pages. About the position of means of communication a publication entitled "*Bilaspur Past, Present and Future*" published in 1954 contains the following remarks :—

"Much has been done of late years to improve communications and there are over a hundred miles of motorable roads:

|                            |                  |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| Bilaspur to Kiratpur       | 30 miles         |
| Bilaspur to Hari Tiliangar | 30 miles         |
| Bilaspur to Talai          | 28 miles         |
| Namol to Bilaspur          | 18 miles         |
| Bilaspur to Dehar          | 18 miles         |
| Bhakra to Nangal           | 7 miles          |
|                            | <u>131 miles</u> |

There are two bridges over the Sutlej, one at Bhajwani and the other at Dehar. In addition, there are over eight ferries over this river on which boats are used."

The difference in the mileage of motorable road as given in the assessment report 1933 and the foregoing account needs explanation. In the former case lengths of routes have been calculated from Bilaspur to respective destinations notwithstanding the fact that some of such destinations lie outside the limit of the boundary of Bilaspur district, while in the latter case mileage has been calculated of the length of roads within the boundary of the district.

The important lines of communication, within the district, as were inherited by the new regime of Himachal Pradesh on the merger of Bilaspur in 1954, are being regularly maintained, extended and linked to new roads. After Independence the construction of roads in the hilly areas

was given high priority. Old roads were further developed and new lines were constructed to connect more and more places. In Bilaspur district the condition of roads was satisfactory compared to few other areas of the Pradesh, still the construction of new lines of communication was necessary and these were taken up and are being taken up every year.

**National Highway No. 21 i.e. Chandigarh-Manali Road :—**This is the only National Highway that passes through the district. During the princely regime Bilaspur was connected with the Punjab on the one side and Mandi State on the other, with motorable roads. But after merger this road was improved, metalled and, at places, re-aligned to make it suitable for heavy vehicles and swift movement.

The highway enters the district territory at village Garmora, 82 km from Chandigarh and 53 km from Bilaspur and leaves it at Salapar bridge over the Satluj river, 31 km from Bilaspur. The total length of the road within the district is about 84 km. The road (within Bilaspur district) is maintained by the Himachal Pradesh Public Works Department and is financed by the Union Government. Up to the end of the financial year 1971-72 a sum of Rs. 29,60,000 had been spent on its construction and maintenance for the portion falling in Bilaspur territory. All the heavy machinery for the construction of the gigantic Beas-Satluj Link Project was transported by this road. Pukka bridges have been constructed over Ghamber, Ghamrola and Ali *khad* besides the one at Salapar over the Satluj.

**Simla-Mandi Road via Bilaspur—**During the princely regime a road had been constructed from Bilaspur to Simla via Arki. The new motorable road was, however, made only after the merger and to-day this road is one of the best roads in the Pradesh. It is throughout pukka and double-lane motorable. Starting from Simla the road passes through Solon district and enters the Bilaspur district territory near Namol, 66 km from Simla. It joins the National Highway No. 21 at Nauni, 8 km before reaching Bilaspur. The length of this road within this district is only sixteen kilometres. From there onwards it becomes the National Highway No. 21 culminating at Manali, in Kulu district.

**Ali Khad crossing-Ghamarwin-Ladror Road—**An eighteen kilometres long chutcha road was constructed between 1932-42 by the erstwhile State connecting the capital Bilaspur with the trans-Satluj tract of Ghamarwin tahsil. From Ghamarwin onwards a track proceeded towards Hamirpur.

After the merger and under the planned developmental programme, the old road was re-aligned as the waters of Satluj river had covered the lower portions of the district as a consequence of the formation of the Gobind



Sagar. Now the road is one of the best roads in the area and connects Himirpur district with it. The major part of the road within this district has been metalled and pukka bridges have been provided over the river Satluj and the Ser stream. The former bridge is at Kandror and is the highest, of its kind, in the whole of Asia. The road is financed and maintained by the Himachal Pradesh Public Works Department. Considerable amount is spent, every year, on its maintenance and improvement. An amount of Rs. 36,85,576 had been spent, since merger, on the construction and maintenance of this road up to the year 1971-72 within the territory of Bilaspur district.

From Ghagas, the starting point of this road, Ghamarwin is 18 km and further on up to Hamirpur it is 44 km from Ghamarwin. The length of the road within the district, from Ali *khad* crossing to Ladrar is 40 km.

**Ghamarwin-Talai-Bhakra Road**—This is one of the new roads, construction of which started in early sixties. It is also motorable, single lane and cutcha. It takes off from the Ali *khad* crossing-Ghamarwin-Ladrar road at Ghamarwin just after crossing the arch bridge over Ser stream and leads towards Talai, which is 30 km distant from Ghamarwin, and reaches a place known as Kodra 18 km further on. Kodra is situated at the brink of Bhakra Dam. The Public Works Department, Himachal Pradesh had spent a sum of Rs. 13,65,000 on the construction of this road up to 1971-72.

**Ghamarwin-Sarkaghat-Jogindernagar Road** : This road was constructed, in 1967, to connect Ghamarwin tahsil with the adjoining Mandi district by a motorable road. It runs for about thirteen kilometres within the district leaving it at village Banoa. On this stretch of 13 km a sum of Rs. 5,88,000 had been spent by the end of the financial year 1971-72.

**Swarghat-Naina, Devi-Bhakra Road** : This road takes off from the National Highway No. 21 at a place about 8 km from Swarghat towards Chandigarh and climbs up the hill to reach the peak and the famous temple of Sri Naina Devi Ji covering a distance of about 13 km. From there the road crosses over to the back side of the hill range and descends down to Bhakra on the left bank of the Satluj river, or say, the Gobind Sagar. But of the total length of about 38 km the road has been metalled up to 25th kilometre; it is motorable single-lane and is being improved continuously.

**Dadhof-Barthin Road** : This is a link road connecting the Ghamarwin-Talai-Bhakra and Ali *khad* crossing-Ghamarwin-Ladrar roads. From Barthin it takes a northern direction and has a zig zag course. The construction was taken up during the Second Plan and was made fit for traffic during the Third Plan. This is a single-lane cutcha road.

**Bagher-Bijepur-Chaunta Road :** This forks from Ali *khad* crossing-Ghamarwin-Lador Road at village Bagher, about 10 km from Ghagas. Its entire length of 30 km is within Ghamarwin tahsil and is cutcha, motorable single-lane. Its construction was undertaken in 1967 and was made motorable in 1972. A sum of Rs. 4,60,000 had been spent on its construction by the 31st March, 1972.

Taking south-westerly direction it passes through Bijepur hamlet where Bijepur-Aur Road joins it. Tikri-Baroh route also joins it at Baroh. The important stages through which the road passes are Samoh, Baroh, Jhandutta, Bharoli and Chaunta.

**Bagher-Barthin Road :** The length of this small road is only 10 km and lies within Ghamarwin tahsil. It also takes off from Ali *khad* crossing-Ghamarwin-Lador Road and runs on Bagher-Bijepur-Chaunta Road up to Bijepur wherefrom it takes a north-westerly course to join the Ghamarwin-Talai-Bhakra Road near Sunhani. The road is cutcha and motorable. A sum of Rs. 6,18,000 had been spent by the end of 1971-72.

**Dadhol-Hari Tiliangar Road :** The starting point of this road is Padyalag near Dadhol hamlet which lies on the Ali *khad* crossing-Ghamarwin-Lador Road. Dadhol-Barthin Road also forks from it near Dadhol. At first it adopts north-westerly course, and after covering about 9 km reaches Hari Tiliangar. It runs through Ghamarwin tahsil only and is cutcha, negotiable by vehicles. By the end of the financial year 1971-72 a sum of Rs. 6,40,000 had been spent by the Public Works Department on its construction.

**Brahmpukhar-Jukhala-Markand-Ali Khad crossing (Ghagas) Road :** During the princely regime a camel track was constructed in 1906 from Brahmpukhar to Jhanda, only about 3 km long. After merger need was felt to connect the villages of Jukhala, Kathpur, Makri and Markand etc. with a motorable road and hence this road. It takes off from Simla-Mandi Road at Brahmpukhar on the 16th km before Bilaspur. During the Third Plan period the road was made fit for traffic. It is 25 km long and lies within Sadar tahsil of the district and is still cutcha. By the end of 1973-74 a sum of Rs. 6,25,000 had been spent on its construction.

**Brahmpukhar-Deothi Road :** This road was also taken up during the Fourth Plan period and a portion of 9 km has been made motorable, the remaining 2.5 km being a track so far. It also takes off from the Simla-Mandi Road (via Bilaspur) at Brahmpukhar. By the end of the year 1974 a sum of Rs. 6,50,000 had been spent on its construction.

**Panoh-Harlog-Smaila Road :** Forking from Bagher-Dehar Road at Panoh, this route measures about 23 km in length. It lies entirely in

Ghamarwin tahsil and was constructed during the period 1967-72. The Public Works Department had incurred an expenditure of Rs. 5,50,000 by the end of the year 1971-72 to make it motorable. The road is cutcha so far.

**Banoha-Bim-Panditehra Road :** This link road, connects Ghamarwin-Sarkaghat-Jogindernagar Road and Ladrer-Hatwar Road. It is 12 km long and lies within Ghamarwin tahsil. It was constructed during the Fourth Plan and an expenditure of Rs. 2,00,000 had been incurred on its construction by the end of 1971-72. It is cutcha and motorable.

**Bagher-Dehar Road :** This 14 km long cutcha road was constructed during the Fourth Plan and is motorable now. Up to the end of 1971-72 a sum of Rs. 3,00,000 had been spent on its construction.

The roads described above are the main lines of communication in the district on which light and heavy vehicles ply to facilitate the passenger and goods transport. Every year more new roads are taken up with an ultimate goal to link all important villages by motorable roads. Given below is a table in which details have been given about all the roads that were being constructed at the time when this gazetteer was being prepared for the press :-

| S. No. | Name of the Road  | Length<br>in km. | Specification                     | Total expenditure<br>till 1973-74<br>(rupees) |
|--------|---|------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1.     | Link road to Shri Naina Devi Ji (from Swarghat-Naina Devi-Bhakra Road). | 1.6              | Motorable                         | 1,54,000                                      |
| 2.     | Nagaon-Beri Road  | 30               | Motorable<br>cutcha               | N A   |
| 3.     | Ganguwal-Toba Road  | 4.6              | -do-                              | 1,40,000                                      |
| 4.     | Swarghat-Zakatkhana-Jeori Road.   | 9                | 4.5 km motorable,<br>rest a track | 68,700  |
| 5.     | Ganguwal-Bassi-Guruka-Lahour Road.                                      | 6                | Motorable cutcha                  | 1,50,000                                      |
| 6.     | Chikna-Bahal-Baloli Road.   | 3.5              | Track                             | N A   |

|                                  |     |                                   |        |
|----------------------------------|-----|-----------------------------------|--------|
| 7. Magzine-Tarsu Road            | 5   | Track                             | 40,000 |
| 8. Brahm-pukhar-Bandla Road      | 10  | -do-                              | N A    |
| 9. Guru-ka-Lahour-illewal Road   | 15  | -do-                              | N A    |
| 10. Panjpiri-Janali Road         | 21  | Trace cutting                     | N A    |
| 11. Bassi-Dhirot Road            | 10  | Motorable cutcha                  | N A    |
| 12. Bagher-Sarnu Road            | 3   | -do-                              | N A    |
| 13. Laraghat-Batoh Road          | 7   | 6 km motorable,<br>rest a track   | N A    |
| 14. Thatch-Sakroha Road          | 7   | Track                             | N A    |
| 15. Road along Ghamarwin bazar   | 1.6 | Motorable                         | 45,500 |
| 16. Ghatu-Tanfalghat Road        | 8   | 4.5 km motorable,<br>rest a track | N A    |
| 17. Harlog-Ghatu Road            | 8   | -do-                              | N A    |
| 18. Dangar Barota-Ladror Road    | 8   | Motorable                         | N A    |
| 19. Kothi-Jangla-Malhot Road     | 12  | 4.5 km motorable,<br>rest a track | N A    |
| 20. Bharoli Kalan-Jejwin Road    | 12  | 9 km motorable,<br>rest a track   | N A    |
| 21. Bhadrog-Kasoi-Morsinghi Road | 7   | 5 km motorable,<br>rest a track   | N A    |
| 22. Talai-Dhanni Road            | 7   | Motorable                         | N A    |

#### VEHICLES AND CONVEYANCES

In the ancient times the modes of conveyance were either beasts such as horses, mules, donkeys and camels, for the common man, or palanquins, litters and sedan-chairs for some fortunate opulent people and high dignitaries. Goods were carried from one place to another on the beasts of burden including sheep and goats. A few ferries, it may be imagined, were

also maintained as of necessity for crossing the river Satluj, at different points, as it divides the district into two almost equal parts. In areas lying far from the ferries, the mode of crossing the river was inflated skins of buffaloes or bulls or goats. All these modes of crossing the rivers are still in vogue, more or less to the same extent, except in so far as the construction of bridges has replaced the age-old devices of going across the river to some extent. Introduction of motor boats has brought into this district a novelty to the local people.

Palanquins have disappeared almost altogether save in so far as in certain emergencies arising out of sudden illness or accidents when the villagers do make use of this mode of conveyance for conveying the afflicted person to any nearby hospital or dispensary or bus terminus in order either to afford speedy first aid and medical aid locally or to enable the patient to push on by means of a vehicle, to a distant hospital or a dispensary. Another use, palanquins are usually put to, is the conveying of a bridegroom and the bride in a wedding procession from one place to another. On such occasions a palanquin is regarded a place of honour and respect.

Ponies and horses, once so much in use, have, due to the appearance of motor vehicles on the scene, dwindled down in number as well as in importance ; or else these have been relegated to the remoter parts of the district to carry the passenger or thier masters or goods on the village paths in order to enable them to catch a motor vehicle. Mules, donkeys and camels too, lost their importance especially on such roads that have been thrown open for vehicular traffic although within the interiors, these are still in great want and service of carrying men and loads. Sheep and goats as a means of carriage of commodities, to and from or within the district do not now command as much importance as they once used to do. The reasons are obvious.

In the new era of science and technology it was towards the close of the year 1934 that the raja of Bilaspur conveyed the first car to Bilaspur on the Swarghat-Nalagarh road. Early in the year 1935 private car traffic became regular. Occasionally lorries were also used for conveying State guests and goods. But public traffic was carried on by mules and camels. Stage carriages were allowed to be plied by some private entrepreneurs. Towards 1942 the service became an established factor in public life, but great difficulty was still felt on account of the fact that the part of the road passing through other territories had not been maintained in good repair. Attainment of Independence by the country and consequent merger of States followed by development in all fields brought for a well regulated transport complex in the district. Short history given below will be interesting to read.

## PUBLIC TRANSPORT

During the pre-merger period bus services were operated in the district by the Bilaspur Transport Services. It was taken over by Himachal Pradesh Government Transport on 1st April, 1957. That transport in Bilaspur was a nationalised undertaking since 1948 would be apparent from an account given in the succeeding paragraph.

\*The only example of a nationalised undertaking controlled by a statutory body established under an Act of the Legislature but given over for management to a Managing Agency was provided by the Bilaspur Transport Authority. This was a statutory body established under the *Bilaspur Transport Authority Act of 2005 BK* and financed by the Government of Bilaspur, Kahlur. The Authority was established for the purpose of continuing and developing an efficient and rationalised system of road transport, particularly in circumstances when transport service was already State controlled."

The organisation and working of the Bilaspur Transport Authority shows that it had all the usual features of a public corporation including commercial audit.

Passenger transport is a nationalised industry in Himachal Pradesh the work of which has been entrusted to the Himachal Pradesh Road Transport Corporation, constituted by the Government in 1974. Before that, the Department of Transport regulated the passenger traffic. There is a Transport Region at Bilaspur which controls the bus services from Bilaspur and some other points to the points within or outside the district. Daily buses ply towards Chandigarh, Simla, Mandi, Manali, Swarghat, Hamirpur, Talai, Bhakra, Shri Naina Devi Ji, Rupar, Dharamsala, Badsar, Santokhgarh, Jwalamukhi, Gherwin, Jahu, Kuthera, Barthin, Bhota, Bhararighat, Jhandutta etc. At Bilaspur a comfortable booking office has been constructed wherein some rooms have been provided as waiting rooms. Also there are waiting rooms attached to the booking offices at some other places. The Corporation maintains a fleet of buses, jeeps and station wagons for the convenience of travellers.

The goods transport is also controlled by the Government and public and private goods carriers ply under certain terms and conditions laid down by the Government. 199 trucks stand registered in the district.

By an agreement, on some routes buses of Punjab and Haryana

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\*Administrative Problems Relating to Nationalisation with Special Reference to Indian State Enterprises by Anand Kumar Murdeshwar (1957).

Roadways also operate on reciprocal basis but the bulk of passenger transport is carried by the Himachal Pradesh Road Transport Corporation.

In areas not served by motor roads, horses and mules are still the means of transport. In 1971 there were 145 horses and 165 mules in the district. All these are owned privately. Besides, there were 69 donkeys and 23 camels for use as pack animals.

Being a hilly terrain, there are no regular horse-driven carts for transport purposes. Only bullock-driven carts in the plain areas are used for carrying agricultural produce. According to the 1970-71 annual season and crop report of the district, there were only 14 carts. Cycles are being increasingly used in the plain areas. There are also, ferries at various points, on river Satluj and in the Gobind Sagar, licenced by the Himachal Pradesh Government. At other places boats are used. Some Motor Boats are now maintained for plying in the Gobind Sagar and used as transport from Bilaspur to Bhakra. Generally the villagers cross the river daily in large number on skins. Use of water transport is the latest development and is being developed increasingly.

### Rail roads

The erstwhile Bilaspur State was not served with any railway line. The nearest rail head to the State, for quite a long period, was at Rupar, distant about eighty kilometres from Bilaspur town. During the last years of the State regime proposal was under consideration for constructing a railway line between Rupar and Bilaspur via Kiratpur but, apparently it did not materialise. For the construction of Bhakra Dam necessity was felt of a railway line to the Dam site for transporting labour and material. Accordingly, a narrow-gauge line from Nangal to the site of Bhakra Dam was constructed which passes through this district for a length of about 10km.

### WATERWAYS, FERRIES AND BRIDGES

The area of the district lies on both sides of the river Satluj. Residents of both parts separated by the river are frequently in need of visiting the other part and this necessitates a good deal of crossing and re-crossing the river. Moreover, transportation of goods and other commodities to and from the trade centres and places on either side of the river, has invariably to be carried out. To meet the requirements of crossing and re-crossing the Satluj traditional and antique means and modes have been, down the ages, inflated skins of the buffaloes or bullocks or goats besides *tumbas* (gourds) and *bharlas*. These are in addition to the ferry boats plying at convenient places. Of late, with the general improvement in the roads and transport facilities, the activities have further multiplied. As a result the number of

ferries is on the increase. Bridges too have been and are being constructed across the river and the smaller streams. With the formation of Gobind Sagar the possibilities of navigation, not so much in the past, have increased manifold. Simultaneously, change has been registered in the means of navigation. Motor launches, for instance, have appeared on the scene. The traditional methods of crossing the river individually on the inflated skins etc. are giving way to the modern means.

There are some waterways on the Gobind Sagar within the district. These are leased temporarily to contractors for plying motor boat service. Some of the main waterways are, the motor boat service from Bilaspur to Bhakra and back ; Bilaspur-Zakatkhana service and Bilaspur-Bhajwani waterway.

**Ferries**—The ferries are governed by the *Himachal Pradesh Ferries Act, 1956 (Act No. 10 of 1956)*. The following table denotes the number and names of the public ferries and motor boat routes so far existing in the district.

| S. No. | Name of the route                                |
|--------|--|
| 1.     | Bhakra-Brahamani Kalan.                          |
| 2.     | Bhakra-Kasorian.                                 |
| 3.     | Bilaspur-Bhajwani-Kandror motor boat route.      |
| 4.     | Bilaspur-Zakatkhana motor boat route.            |
| 5.     | Bilaspur-Bagla-Paplah motor boat route.          |
| 6.     | Naihar-Salapar.                                  |
| 7.     | Rambagh-Salapar.                                 |
| 8.     | Dehar-Salnu.                                     |
| 9.     | Delag-Malyaor.                                   |
| 10.    | Bhajwani bridge crossing.                        |
| 11.    | Kair Khanesar-Behna Jattan, Talwar Behna Jattan. |
| 12.    | Rishikesh-Gassian (Kashneur).                    |
| 13.    | Jeor-Samlet-Sher.                                |



14. Pangwana .
  15. Badhu-Zakatkhana.
  16. Oyal.
  17. Nakrana.
  18. Kachhlaur.
  19. Chaunta.
  20. Kadoh-Kanfara.
  21. Uttapar.
  22. *Seer khad* Katla-Gubbar.
  23. *Seer khad* Lehar-Chhanjoti-Lehar Nala.
  24. *Seer khad* Jejwin-Kasol.
  25. *Seer khad* Kalol-Balghar
  26. *Seer khad* Bagla-Paplah.
  27. *Seer khad* Sunhani.
  28. *Ghamber khad* Ghamber-Zakatkhana, Bowal-Chhadol, Ghamber bridge.
  29. *Ali khad*-Kungarhatti, Luhnu-Kungarhatti.
  30. Brahamani-Badgaon.
  31. Jhulana-Thapna.
  32. Daihan-Nahrul (*Seer khad*, Daihan Nala).
  33. Badhaya-Bandla Mian (*Ali khad*).
  34. *Seer khad*, Nanol Khairian.
  35. Ghamrola-Dharad Sani.
  36. *Seer khad*, Daihan-Jabloo-Chalawa.
  37. Gah-Chalaila.
  38. *Kahrwin khad*, Kahrwin-Matla.
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These ferries are regulated under licence and auction system. To give an idea about the income derived from the source, an amount of Rs. 17,765 was realised under licence system and Rs. 12,000 were realised as auction money for the year 1972-73.

### Bridges

There were two bridges on the Satluj river, one at Bhajwani and the other at Dehar, but due to the construction of Bhakra Dam both came under the water level limits of the Gobind Sagar Reservoir. Therefore, two new bridges, at levels higher to the previous sites, one at Kandror and the other at Salapar had to be constructed.

**Kandror (R.C.C. pre-stressed) bridge**—Ghamarwin tahsil of the district was linked with the Sadar tahsil by means of a bridge across the Satluj at Bhajwani, and after its submergence in the reservoir, a high level bridge at Kandror village was constructed to continue the link of Ghamarwin with the district headquarters. This bridge serves as a vital link between the two sides of the district separated by the Gobind Sagar, much to the convenience of the people. It now provides a through traffic from Bilaspur to Lador. The bridge is about 19 km upstream of Bilaspur and falls on the Ali *khad* crossing-Ghamarwin-Lador Road. Its construction was started in 1959 and was completed by the end of 1964. The span of the bridge is about 285 metres with a breadth of about 7 metres and its height above the lowest river bed below is about 60 metres making it one of the highest bridges in the world.

**Salapar (R. C. C. pre-stressed) bridge**—This bridge has been constructed on the Simla-Mandi via Bilaspur Road across the Satluj, at a distance of about 22 km from Bilaspur towards Mandi. Formerly vehicular traffic between Bilaspur and Mandi was through a suspension bridge at Dehar which was not strong enough to bear the load of heavier vehicles expected to ply on this road carrying equipment for the construction of the Beas-Satluj link project. Moreover, the approach road to Dehar bridge was to get submerged with the rise of the water level of Gobind Sagar Reservoir. The Himachal Pradesh Government therefore accorded high priority for the construction of Salapar bridge.

The construction of this bridge was started in February, 1960 and was completed by the end of January, 1964. The total length of this double-lane bridge is about 139 m with a breadth of about 6.7 m. It was constructed at a cost of Rs. 10,15,197.

**Sir *khad* R.C.C. Arch bridge**—This bridge has a span of about 39.6 m with a breadth of 6.7 m. It was constructed by the Himachal Pradesh Public Works Department during 1957-1962 at a cost of Rs. 2,33,000. It

lies on the *Ali khad* crossing-Ghamarwin-Ladror Road, about 1 km away from Ghamarwin.

**Ali khad (Ghagas) R.C.C. bridge**—It has a span of about 30.5 m and a breadth of 6.7 m and lies on the NH 21 on the 11th km from Bilaspur. It was constructed by the Himachal Pradesh Public Works Department during the first three years of the Second Five Year Plan at a cost of Rs. 2,62,000.

**Ghamrola bridge**—The Ghamrola stream, falling on the 5th km from Bilaspur (towards Rupar) on the National Highway No. 21 was bridged by the Public Works Department during the Second Five Year Plan. It is 105 m long with a width of 6.7 m.

**R.C.C. pre-stressed bridge on Jamthal nullah**—This bridge has a span of about 40 m and breadth of 6.7 m. It is 21 km from Bilaspur on the National Highway No. 21 towards Manali and its construction was completed in 1963. Its total cost comes to Rs. 1,58,000.

**Steel truss bridge across Majhasu nullah**—This bridge has been constructed over the Majhasu nullah falling on the *Ali khad* crossing-Ghamarwin-Ladror Road. Its construction was started in 1968 and was completed in 1970 with a total expenditure of Rs. 2,66,000. It is 33.5 m long.

**R.C.C.T-beam bridge over Bai khad**—Another bridge falling on the *Ali khad* crossing-Ghamarwin-Ladror Road was constructed over the Bai stream during the years 1967 to 1969 at a cost of Rs. 1,50,000. Its span is about 35 m.

**R.C.C. bridge over Ghamber river**—falling on the NH 21, is situated at a distance of about 10 km from Swarghat towards Bilaspur.

Besides these important bridges, there are numerous others, over the streams and streamlets, which facilitate easy communication during the rainy season when the streams are in spate.

#### **Transport by air**

The only mentionable and interesting point in the context of transport by air is that in the history of Bilaspur, twice have the aircrafts landed on the once exciting and vast Sandhu field. Since this large level ground has submerged into the Gobind Sagar, there are no future possibilities of any air transport being carried from any point within the district. Bhuntar (Kulu) and Chandigarh are the two nearest airports.

#### **TRAVEL AND TOURIST FACILITIES**

The Public Relations Department has set up one Information Centre at Bilaspur which provides information to the interested visiting tourists and

travellers on various local objects and places of interest, falling within the district. A tourist guide is available to assist the tourists in drawing their itinerary to visit different places within the district.

The newly built Bilaspur township is indeed an attraction to the tourists from more than one point of view. There have come up a few hotels and restaurants providing boarding and lodging facilities. Some ordinary restaurants (*dhabas*) are also there in the township providing vegetarian and non-vegetarian food. Besides, there is comfortable accommodation in the Government rest-houses and dak-bungalows which are mentioned in the succeeding paragraphs. Besides Bilaspur township, ordinary *dhabas* exist at Swarghat, Gara Moura (near Kiratpur), Ghamarwin, Aur, Shri Naina Devi Ji, Barthin and Talai.

The Departments of Public Works and Forests maintain a number of rest-houses, inspection houses and dak-bungalows for the use of departmental officers and tourists. The policy is now to make the accommodation in these rest-houses available to the visiting tourists.

1. Circuit House at new Bilaspur Township was constructed during the year 1960 at an expenditure of Rs. 1,65,000. It contains three suites.
2. Class I and II rest-house, New Bilaspur Township was also constructed during 1959-60 at a cost of Rs. 37,000. It also contains three suites.
3. Class III rest-house, Bilaspur, adjacent to the Circuit House and the rest-house, has been built to facilitate the officials accompanying their officers on tour. It contains two suites.
4. Rest-house at Dholra-Yet another P. W. D. rest-house containing four suites is situated on the outskirts of the town on a picturesque hill wherefrom a view of the snowy Dhauladhar can be had.
5. Municipal Rest-house at Bilaspur has accommodation capacity of two suites.
6. A State-time rest-house exists at Namol on the Simla-Bilaspur Road. It has two furnished suites.
7. In 1963 a rest-house was constructed at Ghamarwin at a total cost of Rs. 60,000. It has two suites.
8. A two-suite rest-house was constructed at Talai during 1963 at a cost of Rs. 67,000.
9. There is a rest-house at Swarghat having two suites constructed

in the sixties at a cost of Rs. 60,000.

10. Small town committee, Shri Naina Devi Ji, has constructed a rest-house at Shri Naina Devi Ji, for the convenience of pilgrims and tourists having accommodation of two suites.

11. At a distance of about 70 km from Bilaspur, on the Swarghat-Naina Devi-Bhakra Road, is situated the forest rest-house at Badoh comprising two suites.

12. Another rest-house, on the above mentioned road, at Bassi is about 84 km from Bilaspur. This two-suite rest-house was constructed by the Forest Department during 1958-59.

13. Forest rest-house at Gochar is about 48 km from Bilaspur and falls on the Ghamarwin-Talai-Bhakra Road. It also contains two suites.

14. A rest-house at Lakhanpur, on the Simla-Bilaspur road, is about 3 km from Bilaspur towards Simla. It has two suites.

15. Forest rest-house at Malhot is approachable by Bagher-Bijepur-Chaunta Road and from Bilaspur is about 70 km distant. It also contains two suites.

16. A rest-house at Saloa is approachable by Swarghat-Naina Devi-Bhakra Road. It was constructed, in 1958-59, by the Forest Department at a cost of Rs. 9,600. It contains two suites.

17. At Swarghat also a forest rest-house, containing two suites, has been provided.

18. There is a rest-house at Bahadurpur, 17 km south of Namol having two suites.

Beside the forest rest-houses, mentioned at serial number 11 to 18, there are forest inspection huts also at Nihari, Paniala, Samoh, Ghamarwin and Chharol.

All the P.W.D and Forest rest-houses are well furnished and have been provided with chowkidars, *malis* and sweepers. In some forest rest-houses, Forest Guards have been posted to attend the visitors. Permits for the P.W.D. rest-houses can be arranged from the office of the Executive Engineer, Bilaspur and for the forest rest-houses these can be arranged from the Divisional Forest Officer, Bilaspur. The municipal rest-houses at Bilaspur and Shri Naina Devi Ji can be booked from the respective offices of the committees.

For the convenience of tourists, Himachal Pradesh Tourism Corporation has also built a tourist bungalow at Bilaspur which can provide lodging and boarding facilities for fourteen inmates, at a time. A road-side tourist cafeteria is also being constructed by the Corporation which will provide food, drinks, beverages and snacks to the tourists moving through National Highway No. 21 to Bilaspur or towards Mandi, Kulu and Manali etc.

## POSTS, TELEGRAPHS AND TELEPHONES

### Posts

It is not known as to when the postal facilities were provided in the district for the first time. During the pre-Independence period the postal arrangements were perhaps conducted under the Imperial Postal Convention held in 1887. During 1910 there were branch post offices at Ghamarwin and Bilaspur proper and a daily post used to go by a runner between the two places, and also between Bilaspur and Simla. By 1947 the branch post offices were raised to the standard of sub post-offices and eleven branch post-offices were opened at the headquarters of eleven parganas. After Independence much has been done towards the development of postal facilities all over the Pradesh. At present there is a Head Post Office at Bilaspur, sub post offices at Barthin, Bhakra Dam, New Bilaspur Township, Bilaspur Kutchery with P.C.O., Ghamarwin with P.C.O., Hatwar, Jhandutta, Jukhala, Lehri Sarail, Namol (EDSO), Talai, Aur and Gherwin and branch post offices at the following places.

- |                    |                |                |
|--------------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1. Amarpur         | 12. Zakatkhana | 23. Jejwin     |
| 2. Baneola         | 13. Nahrana    | 24. Jahoo      |
| 3. Bassi Kahlur    | 14. Badgaon    | 25. Kalol      |
| 4. Behal           | 15. Chhatt     | 26. Matla      |
| 5. Beri Rezadian   | 16. Jhandutta  | 27. Malhot     |
| 6. Bagher          | 17. Gandhir    | 28. Malaon     |
| 7. Chandpur        | 18. Kaparh     | 29. Nakrana    |
| 8. Chharol         | 19. Karloti    | 30. Deoth      |
| 9. Kaolonwala Toba | 20. Sunhani    | 31. Rani Kotla |
| 10. Kandror        | 21. Bhakra     | 32. Chalahli   |
| 11. Kothipura      | 22. Makri      | 33. Morsinghi  |

|                        |                    |                   |
|------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| 34. Lakhanpur          | 45. Saloa          | 56. Masaur        |
| 35. Shri Naina Devi Ji | 46. Tarsu          | 57. Nanwan        |
| 36. Panjgain           | 47. Bari Majherwin | 58. Nalti         |
| 37. Raghunathpura      | 48. Dadhol         | 59. Taliana       |
| 38. Rishikesh          | 49. Kothi          | 60. Barota        |
| 39. Sakroha            | 50. Malaur         | 61. Dangar        |
| 40. Samoh              | 51. Maswal         | 62. Brahami Kalan |
| 41. Swarghat           | 52. Rohin          | 63. Dashlena      |
| 42. Swahn PCO          | 53. Maharana       | 64. Gangloah      |
| 43. Tamhol             | 54. Panditehra     | 65. Nighai        |
| 44. Totoh              | 55. Bharoli Kalan  | 66. Bharari       |

### Telegraphs

Bilaspur, the district headquarters, is connected with telegraph and within the premises of the Posts and Telegraphs building there is a sub-office of telegraphs also. Telegraphic facilities are also available at Ghamarwin, the headquarters of the tahsil of the same name. The telegraph sub-office, here, is also located in the sub-post office. The telegraph service in Ghamarwin and Bilaspur was started only in about 1958.

### Telephones

The district is linked with Simla by telephone. The telephone link to Bilaspur was established only in about 1959. There is now a direct line instead of the old one through Mandi and Pathankot. At present there are two telephone exchanges in the district, one at Bilaspur and the other at Ghamarwin. At Bilaspur the central battery manual exchange has a capacity of 200 lines and has under it, 140 connections. At Ghamarwin, the SAS automatic exchange is of 35 lines capacity with 22 connections. Besides there are telephone facilities in the post offices at Bilaspur, Swahan and Ghamarwin where public call offices stand installed.

**Radio and wireless stations :** During the princely regime in about 1941 a wireless receiving and broadcasting set, run by a petrol engine, was installed in the Anand Club at Bilaspur. But the engine did not work properly and the same had to be abandoned. After the formation of Bilaspur district, Police Department installed a departmental wireless station

for receiving and transmitting Government messages at Bhakra during the year 1958-59 but that too was closed down in 1960. At present there is only one wireless station operated by the Police Department, at Bilaspur, for the reception and transmission of important Government messages.

The radio sets are no more a luxury but have become a necessity to those who can afford and people generally have radio or transistors in their homes. Radio is the only mode of entertainment easily available. For their portability transistors are gaining popularity among the people. Apart from the radio sets owned and possessed by private individuals. Department of Public Relations also maintains a network of radio sets in the district, for the benefit of the community. The community listening scheme was put into operation for providing radio listening facilities to the people so that they could know about the day-to-day happenings in the Pradesh and the country. The Public Relations Department, Himachal Pradesh Government, has installed about three hundred and fifty community listening sets in the rural areas of the district. For the implementation of community listening scheme successfully, maintenance and service scheme for the radio sets was also introduced by the department in 1957. Under this scheme, facilities for repairs on-the-spot or at the nearest maintenance service centre, have been provided in the rural areas by setting up maintenance centres at Ghamarwin and Bilaspur proper circles. District servicing centre was later on added at Bilaspur.

### ORGANISATIONS OF OWNERS AND EMPLOYEES

The transport service is a nationalised one in Himachal Pradesh and as such there are no organisations of private owners or employers in the field of transport and communication. The employees of the Himachal Pradesh Road Transport Corporation have their organisation called the Himachal Transport Workers Union. This Union has its headquarters at Simla and looks after the welfare of all the employees scattered throughout the Pradesh.

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# **Chapter VIII**

## **MISCELLANEOUS OCCUPATIONS**

Adequate material being not available to justify an entity of a separate chapter, therefore, the information pertaining to this chapter has been treated in the succeeding chapter.



# **Chapter IX**

## **ECONOMIC TRENDS**

### **LIVELIHOOD PATTERN**

According to the 1951 census the occupational distribution of population of Bilaspur district (part 'C' State in 1951) was that out of the total population of 1,26,099, the largest number of persons viz 97,109 were returned as cultivators, of land, wholly or mainly owned, and their dependents. These were followed, in numerical strength, by 13,980 persons returned as cultivators, of land, wholly or mainly unowned, and their dependents. Then came 1,985 cultivating labourers, and their dependents. The next class of people comprising 1323 persons was of non-cultivating owners of land, agricultural rent receivers and their dependents. The number of persons engaged in production, other than cultivation, stood at 5,541, as many as 2,185 persons were engaged in commerce, 297 souls earned their livelihood from transport and 3,678 persons were occupied in other miscellaneous services. Thus about 90.7 per cent of people were dependent, directly or indirectly, upon agriculture. The remaining 9.3 per cent were engaged in non-agricultural occupations. Of the people depending on agriculture, 84.9 per cent were cultivators of land wholly or mainly owned, and their dependents, 1.7 per cent cultivating labourers and the rest viz 1.2 per cent were non-cultivating owners of land and rent receivers etc. Among non-agricultural occupationists 47.4 per cent were engaged in production other than cultivation, 18.8 per cent in commerce, 2.5 per cent in transport and the rest (31.4 per cent) in other services. Of the total population, 40.1 per cent were self-supporting, 5.5 per cent earning dependents and 54.4 per cent non-earning dependents.

The categories of persons supported by occupations other than cultivation include primary industries such as stock raising, rearing of small animals, forestry and fishing which support one hundred and eighty-two persons comprising five employers, eleven employees and one hundred and sixty-six independent workers. The number of persons depending upon mining and quarrying was two hundred and thirteen including six employees and two hundred and seven independent workers. The number of persons dependent upon processing and manufacture of food stuffs, textile and products thereof was nine hundred and thirty-nine including seven employers and eight employees. Processing and manufacture of metals, chemicals and products thereof engage two hundred and ninety-five persons including four

employers and twelve employees. Three hundred and seventy-four persons were dependent upon processing and manufacture not elsewhere specified. Employers among them were six persons, five females were employees and the remaining three hundred and sixty-three were independent workers. Construction and utilities provided livelihood to one hundred and sixty-nine persons including three employers, twenty-six employees and one hundred and forty independent workers. Commerce supports seven hundred and ninety-five persons, including twenty-two employers, six employees, and seven hundred and sixty-seven independent workers. Transport, storage and communication provided subsistence to two hundred and fifty-four persons including eight employers and one hundred and seventy-eight employees and sixty-eight independent workers. Health education and public administration absorbed five hundred and eighteen persons including five hundred and twelve employees and six independent workers. Finally six hundred and fifty-two persons were dependent upon services not elsewhere specified (such as domestic services, hotels, legal business and welfare workers). Out of them six were employers and three hundred and seventy persons were employees. The remaining two hundred and seventy-six persons were independent workers.

In 1961 census the livelihood pattern was reclassified into ten categories. These figures reveal that out of a total population of 1,58,806 persons 75,838 persons, (including 34,739 males and 41,099 females) were non-workers constituting 47.7 per cent of the total population. Next to non-workers were 66,338 persons (including 33,981 males and 32,407 females) constituting 41.8 per cent of the population that were returned as cultivators. 6,416 souls constituting 4.04 per cent of the total population derive their livelihood from household industry. Three per cent of the total population, comprising 4,826 souls were found engaged in other services and 2,555 persons i.e. about 1.6 per cent of the total population were employed in construction work. Out of the total population, eight hundred and forty-one people (0.5%) worked as agricultural labourers, seven hundred and seventy-three (0.4%) derived their livelihood from trade and commerce, five hundred and sixty-nine (0.3%) supported themselves from manufacturing other than household industry, three hundred and thirty-one (0.2%) were engaged in transport, storage and communication and the remaining two hundred and sixty-nine (0.1%) were engaged in mining and quarrying. These statistics bring out one prominent feature that agriculture is the mainstay of the people and therefore, by and large, the livelihood pattern is influenced by this occupation.

### PRICES

Contrary to the present practice there was no system of the

maintenance of record of prices in any part of the area now comprised in Bilaspur district. According to the first settlement report of 1907 there was no register of prices nor was there any significant town or bazar. Therefore, the rates taken into consideration, during that settlement were largely imaginary. The following retail prices, stated in seers and chhataks per rupee, of certain commodities, were taken into account.

|         |              |          |         |        |
|---------|--------------|----------|---------|--------|
| Paddy.  | Maize.       | Kangani. | Koda.   | China. |
| 24.0    | 32.0         | 32.0     | 40.0    | 32.0   |
| Ginger. | Moth & Moog. |          | Mash.   | Wheat. |
| 28.0    | 30.0         |          | 20.0    | 28.0   |
| Barley. | Gram.        | Harar.   | Masoor. | Kulth. |
| 32.0    | 32.0         | 30.0     | 20.0    | 36.0   |

The Settlement Report further mentions that whenever land revenue in kind was converted into cash land revenue the following rates formed the conversion factor in 1907.

Maize 32 seers per rupee.

Paddy 32 seers per rupee.

Mash 32 seers per rupee.

Wheat 24 seers per rupee.

Harar 24 seers per rupee.

Gram 24 seers per rupee.

No earlier mention of prices is available. Subsequently, it appears, maintenance of record of retail prices came into vogue by about the year 1921. The following table shows the retail prices as current on first January in each year, for the year 1921 to 1933 in seers and chhataks per rupee :

| Year | Wheat |    | Barley |    | Maize |    | Gram |    | Firewood |    | Salt (Lahori) |    |
|------|-------|----|--------|----|-------|----|------|----|----------|----|---------------|----|
|      | S.    | C. | S.     | C. | S.    | C. | S.   | C. | S.       | C. | S.            | C. |
| 1921 | 8     | 12 | —      | —  | 12    | 0  | 10   | 0  | 80       | 0  | 9             | 0  |
| 1922 | 3     | 12 | —      | —  | 8     | 0  | 3    | 8  | 80       | 0  | 7             | 12 |
| 1923 | 12    | 12 | —      | —  | 19    | 0  | 16   | 0  | 80       | 0  | 10            | 8  |
| 1924 | 19    | 2  | —      | —  | 25    | 0  | 21   | 4  | 80       | 0  | 8             | 0  |
| 1925 | 7     | 8  | —      | —  | 9     | 0  | 6    | 0  | 80       | 0  | 8             | 4  |
| 1926 | 9     | 0  | —      | —  | 10    | 5  | 8    | 5  | 80       | 0  | 9             | 7  |
| 1927 | 8     | 10 | —      | —  | 9     | 0  | 7    | 10 | 80       | 0  | 8             | 4  |
| 1928 | 7     | 8  | —      | —  | 8     | 0  | 5    | 0  | 80       | 0  | 10            | 0  |
| 1929 | 5     | 0  | —      | —  | 10    | 10 | 9    | 8  | 80       | 0  | 12            | 0  |
| 1930 | 12    | 0  | —      | —  | 12    | 8  | 7    | 0  | 80       | 0  | 13            | 0  |
| 1931 | 16    | 0  | 20     | 0  | 34    | 0  | 25   | 0  | 80       | 0  | 10            | 0  |
| 1932 | 12    | 0  | 16     | 0  | 20    | 0  | 16   | 0  | 80       | 0  | 11            | 0  |
| 1933 | 12    | 0  | 17     | 0  | 14    | 0  | 16   | 0  | 70       | 0  | 12            | 0  |

In 1933 another settlement was conducted in Bilaspur. Naturally the prices of various commodities again figured in the assessment report. The account contained in the assessment report is reproduced below :

<sup>14</sup>It was stated in paragraph 6(B) of my forecast report, dated the 18th February 1929, that a rise of 75 per cent in prices had taken place since last settlement. But the economic conditions of the country have undergone a marked change since then. Prices have fallen considerably and no one can state with any degree of certainty what will be their range in future years, and when the fluctuations will cease. After eliminating the three years of famine, viz. Sammats 1978, 1984 and 1985 in which, though the rainfall was good, prices kept very high, the average of<sup>2</sup> eighteen years, from St. 1965 to 1985, has been taken as data for fixing prices for the produce estimate".

2. *Assessment Report of Bilaspur State 1933* by P.L. Chandu Lal.

1. Actually twenty years.

"The prices are the average of the wholesale prices at harvest time at which zamindars sell their produce to dealers. They have been obtained from the account books of the traders of village Dhar Tatoh which is a fairly big village of Pargana Sadr, about 12 miles from Bilaspur, in a remote corner of the State, far away from roads. The following table will show the prices in seers, per rupee, adopted by me. The enumerators denote my prices and denominators those of the last Settlement.

|                         | Kharif | Rise<br>per cent | Rabi                  | Rise<br>per cent |
|-------------------------|--------|------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| <i>Makki</i>            | 25/32  | 28               | Wheat                 | 20/28 40         |
| <i>Dhan</i>             | 20/24  | 20               | Gram                  | 24/32 33½        |
| <i>Kangni</i>           | 25/32  | 28               | Masoor                | 11/20 82         |
| <i>Koda</i>             | 32/40  | 25               | Sarsaf & Tara<br>Mira | 11/14 27         |
| <i>Moth &amp; Moong</i> | 24/30  | 25               | Barley                | 24/32 33½        |
| <i>China</i>            | 25/32  | 28               | Gochni                | 22/30 36         |
| <i>Mash</i>             | 12/20  | 66               |                       |                  |
| <i>Kulth</i>            | 32/36  | 12½              |                       |                  |
| Ginger                  | 20/28  | 40               |                       |                  |
| Other oil seeds         | 32/40  | 25 "             |                       |                  |

Record of prices is again not available for the year 1934-35. Table given below shows the retail price level of the main commodities during subsequent seven years, expressed in seers and *chhataks* per rupee :—

| Years. | Rice. |    | Maize. |    | Wheat. |    | Gram. |    | Mash. |    | Ghee |    |
|--------|-------|----|--------|----|--------|----|-------|----|-------|----|------|----|
|        | S.    | C. | S.     | C. | S.     | C. | S.    | C. | S.    | C. | S.   |    |
| 1936   | 7     | 10 | 15     | 5  | 12     | 4  | 13    | 14 | 10    | 0  | 1    | 8  |
| 1937   | 7     | 14 | 19     | 12 | 15     | 10 | 13    | 9  | 8     | 13 | 1    | 0  |
| 1938   | 8     | 4  | 25     | 10 | 20     | 4  | 9     | 6  | 5     | 9  | 0    | 15 |
| 1939   | 8     | 5  | 18     | 9  | 14     | 8  | 8     | 4  | 6     | 0  | 0    | 15 |
| 1940   | 8     | 2  | 18     | 8  | 14     | 7  | 16    | 8  | 7     | 5  | 0    | 11 |
| 1941   | 6     | 2  | 18     | 5  | 11     | 6  | 13    | 2  | 5     | 12 | 0    | 12 |
| 1942   | 4     | 6  | 11     | 0  | 8      | 10 | 8     | 6  | 4     | 3  | 0    | 10 |

There was a slight fall in prices during 1938-1940. But during 1941-42 the prices steadily rose because of the War. Rise in prices in 1942 on those prevailing in 1938, the year preceding the beginning of War was, rice 88 per cent, maize 133 per cent, wheat 135 per cent, gram 12 per cent, *mash* 33 per cent and ghee 50 per cent. The crops of gram and *mash* had been damaged in 1938 due to unkind weather; their price had, therefore, already gone high in that year. Maize and wheat are the chief articles of consumption here. Their price had been more than doubled. The rise in the cost of living had, therefore, been co-extensive with the rise in the price of these commodities. They however, brought proportionate prosperity to large holdings with surplus produce. The *kharif* crop had been normal, except in the years 1934, 1938 and 1942 when the area cropped was 94 per cent, 93 per cent and 89 per cent, of the area sown, the leanest year being 1942. *Rabi* crop had been uniform throughout the year 1942, when it was best of all. *Kharif* being the chief harvest of the year, its failure in 1942 when the prices rose highest, was almost calamitous. From 1942 onwards till 1956 there occurs again a gap for which records of prices are unavailable. Since 1956 a regular record of wholesale prices is being maintained by the Directorate of Land Records. The following table denotes the wholesale prices in rupees per 37.5 kg of some important commodities.

| Years. | Wheat. | Gram.<br>Dal. | Gram<br>whole. | Moong<br>Dal.<br>(Split<br>and<br>washed). | Moong<br>Dal.<br>(Split<br>and<br>washed). | Ghee<br>Pure<br>Desi. | Salt<br>Samb-<br>har. | Cotton<br>seeds<br>(Desi). | Gunny<br>Bags<br>Twills<br>2½lbs<br>100<br>bags. | Fire<br>wood. |
|--------|--------|---------------|----------------|--|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|--|---------------|
| 1956   | 18.10  | 15.17         | 20.00          | 25.00                                      | 25.00                                      | 220.00                | 4.50                  | 17.00                      | 125.00   | 2.00          |
| 1957   | 17.37  | 14.90         | 21.04          | 25.00                                      | 31.87                                      | 219.00                | 4.50                  | 18.02                      | 127.00   | 2.17          |
| 1958   | 17.50  | 15.14         | 20.64          | 30.32                                      | 35.80                                      | 228.00                | 4.79                  | 19.23                      | 125.00   | 2.52          |
| 1959   | 21.52  | 15.62         | 25.67          | 32.93                                      | 39.39                                      | 240.00                | 4.52                  | 20.75                      | 125.00   | 2.28          |
| 1960   | 18.83  | 14.00         | 21.36          | 31.53                                      | 36.61                                      | 240.00                | 4.88                  | 20.08                      | 115.73   | 2.31          |
| 1961   | 15.78  | 14.76         | —              | —  | —  | —                     | —                     | —                          | —  | —             |
| 1962   | 15.83  | 16.00         | —              | —  | —  | —                     | —                     | —                          | —  | —             |
| 1963   | 17.41  | 17.43         | —              | —  | —  | —                     | —                     | —                          | —  | —             |
| 1964   | 61.15  | 58.62         | —              | —  | —  | —                     | —                     | —                          | —  | —             |
| 1965   | 72.72  | 76.06         | —              | —  | —  | —                     | —                     | —                          | —  | —             |
| 1966   | 124.16 | 125.31        | —              | —  | —  | —                     | —                     | —                          | —  | —             |
| 1967   | 79.86  | 94.73         | —              | —  | —  | —                     | —                     | —                          | —  | —             |
| 1968   | 79.57  | 94.41         | —              | —  | —  | —                     | —                     | —                          | —  | —             |
| 1969   | 94.83  | 106.33        | —              | —  | —  | —                     | —                     | —                          | —  | —             |
| 1970   | 73.34  | 88.75         | —              | —  | —  | —                     | —                     | —                          | —  | —             |

### WAGES

As in the case of statistics relating to prices so also in the case of rates of wages, it appears, there has been made, in the past, no attempt to maintain a regular record. According to a sketchy account contained in the old gazetteer of 1910, Julahas, Chamars, Kolis and Dumas constituted, in the past, principal agricultural labourers. They either worked as *kamas* by



| Year    | Skilled |    |    |        |    |    | Unskilled |    |    |        |    |    |
|---------|---------|----|----|--------|----|----|-----------|----|----|--------|----|----|
|         | Highest |    |    | Lowest |    |    | Highest   |    |    | Lowest |    |    |
|         | Rs.     | A. | P. | Rs.    | A. | P. | Rs.       | A. | P. | Rs.    | A. | P. |
| 1922-23 | 2       | 0  | 0  | 1      | 0  | 0  | 1         | 0  | 0  | 0      | 8  | 0  |
| 1926-27 | 3       | 0  | 0  | 1      | 0  | 0  | 1         | 0  | 0  | 0      | 10 | 0  |
| 1931-32 | 2       | 0  | 0  | 1      | 12 | 0  | 0         | 12 | 0  | 0      | 5  | 0  |

| Year    | Skilled   |           | Unskilled    |                                |
|---------|-----------|-----------|--------------|--------------------------------|
|         | Highest   | Lowest    | Highest      | Lowest                         |
| 1       | 2         | 3         | 4            | 5                              |
|         | Rs.       | Rs.       | Rs.          | Rs.                            |
| 1948-49 | 4 per day | 3 per day | 43 per month | Same per month as in column 4. |
| 1949-50 | 4 per day | 3 per day | 45 per month | do—                            |
| 1950-51 | 4 per day | 3 per day | 45 per month | —do—                           |
| 1951-52 | 4 per day | 3 per day | 45 per month | —do—                           |
| 1952-53 | 4 per day | 3 per day | 50 per month | —do—                           |

|         |              |              |              |              |
|---------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| 1953-54 | 4 per day    | 3 per day    | 52 per month | —do—         |
| 1954-55 | 5 per day    | 3 per day    | 52 per month | —do—         |
| 1955-56 | 5 per day    | 4 per day    | 56 per month | —do—         |
| 1956-57 | 5 per day    | 4 per day    | 57 per month | —do—         |
| 1957-58 | 5 per day    | 4 per day    | 57 per month | —do—         |
| 1958-59 | 5 per day    | 4 per day    | 57 per month | —do—         |
| 1959-60 | 5 per day    | 2.54 per day | 78 per month | 35 per month |
| 1960-61 | 5 per day    | 3.75 per day | 73 per month | 38 per month |
| 1961-62 | 4.50 per day | 3.65 per day | 72 per month | 39 per month |
| 1962-63 | 5 per day    | 4 per day    | 80 per month | 40 per month |
| 1963-64 | 4.60 per day | 4.50 per day | 2.50 per day | 1.50 per day |
| 1964-65 | 4.50 per day | 4 per day    | 4.50 per day | 1 per day    |
| 1965-66 | 5.88 per day | 4.50 per day | 3.28 per day | 2 per day    |
| 1966-67 | 4.75 per day | 4.37 per day | 2.75 per day | 2 per day    |
| 1967-68 | 6.00 per day | 5.00 per day | 3.00 per day | 2 per day    |
| 1968-69 | 5.00 per day | 4.50 per day | 3.00 per day | 2.50 per day |
| 1969-70 | 6.00 per day | 5.00 per day | 3.00 per day | 2.50 per day |
| 1970-71 | 6.00 per day | 5.00 per day | 3.00 per day | 2.50 per day |
| 1971-72 | 7.00 per day | 6.00 per day | 4.00 per day | 3.50 per day |

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After the merger of States there have become available two main sources for the supply of statistics relating to the wages, namely, the Public Works Department which by far, employs a large number of labourers to various constructional activities and the Directorate of Land Records which has been charged with the duties of collection of data relating to agricultural wages in the rural areas and other wages in the urban areas with a view to ascertain the standard rates of wages and to observing permanent changes in those standard rates. This has been considered necessary for the reason that agricultural wages constitute a major item in the cost of the production

of the crop and, therefore, it is essential to have an idea of the variations in this item in order to assess the trend in agricultural cost. This data is now collected on a uniform basis monthly of the wages that are most commonly current during the particular month. It is also now desired by the Government that a quinquennial investigation be made by the Director of Land Records into the actual facts as to the prevailing wages, with a view to ascertaining the standard rates of wages and to observe permanent changes in those standard rates. Because of these directions it has been possible to have a regular record of wage statistics as shown above.

Non-availability of data on wages in the past is explainable by more than one reason. Firstly, engagement of labour by the predominant agricultural community was extremely negligible. Whenever there was need for extra hands those were procured on reciprocal basis involving no payment of wages at all. The services of village artisans were secured, no doubt, on certain traditional and customary payments, usually in kind, of which no regular record was ever maintained. Secondly, demand for labour, other than the agricultural labour, was next to nothing and as such there was hardly any need to maintain a record of wages paid to them. Thirdly, the system of *begar* was in vogue upto recently under which the requirements of labour by the State Administration or the ruler were met without payment of any fixed or standard wages.

One thing in the context of wages is particularly remarkable in this district. Although labour requirements were comparatively little within Bilaspur yet this tract sent out a large number of male labourers to certain towns for earning the wages. In this connection the Settlement Officer has left the following account in the assessment report drawn in 1933.

"Enquiry made through the Municipal Committee of Simla shows that the Bilaspur State supplied, in 1933, no less than 1,233 Rickshaw coolies and job porters for Simla alone. Assume at least 100 more for Jutogh, Subathoo, Dagshai, Solan and Dharampur. Bilaspur is famous for supplying cooks and menial servants of all kinds in the principal cities and towns of the Punjab. I take their number at 500. The total number of coolies and labourers who got outside for work, comes to approximately 1,800 men. It is an admitted fact that each coolie at Simla saves at least Rs. 60/- per season. If we take this as the average for all men whether at Simla or other places, the total savings of 1,800 men amount to Rs. 1,08,000/- which they bring home".

### STANDARD OF LIVING

No serious attempt would seem to have been made in the past to ascertain the standard of living of the people of this district either by the

administration or by any private individual and, therefore, the necessary outcome is that very little is known about the material conditions of the people that obtained in the past. But from some stray references here and there and from the written records of the adjoining areas it can, however, be safely inferred that the standard of living of the people has been all through the ages very low in terms of the present meaning of the concept of the standard of living. In the *Settlement Report of 1907* there is a brief description of the general condition of the people to the effect that a sizable part of the population is Kanets, the traditional class of industrious agriculturists clinging to the primitive methods of cultivation and very backward in the matter of learning the new agricultural techniques. Rajputs do not cultivate the land in great number nor are they industrious and some of them even shun to touch the plough. As a result of these circumstances they are comparatively economically backward. Rathis though put their heart to cultivate their holdings yet they are less industrious than the Kanets. People are generally thrifty and rest content with whatever they produce from their lands. Rajputs and Rathis are more inclined to join the Army. Kanets are less disposed to service and for three or four months in a year they engage themselves as labourers spending rest of the time in their agricultural and domestic pursuits. Generally majority of the people are non-vegetarians though teetotaler. Their standard of living is very simple. As a rule they consume maize, *ragi* and *mush* while rice and wheat are sold. Milk they do not take though butter-milk is used extensively. Only a small part of ghee is consumed, the remaining put on sale.

In the Assessment Report of 1933 the agricultural classes and their characteristics have been described in the following terms :—

“\*The principal agricultural classes owning and cultivating land and the percentage of land revenue paid by each, will appear from the table below.

| Tahsil      | Kanets | Brahmins | Rajputs | Gujars | Kolis<br>Dumnas | Chamars<br>Lohars etc. |
|-------------|--------|----------|---------|--------|-----------------|------------------------|
| 1           | 2      | 3        | 4       | 5      | 6               | 7                      |
| Sadar       | 63     | 14       | 11      | 4      | 8               | —                      |
| Ghamarwin   | 32     | 34       | 27      | 2      | 5               | —                      |
| Total State | 44     | 26       | 20      | 3      | 7               | —                      |

\*Assessment Report of the Bilaspur State 1933 by P. L. Chandu Lal, p. 26.

All tribes, excepting the Rajputs, make good cultivators. But Kanets and Brahmins are the best. Both are hardworking and thrifty. Their wants are few. Their women folk considerably help them in their agricultural employment. Rajputs, though they have improved, are still greatly handicapped by the "Purdah" which precludes their women from helping them in their agricultural pursuits. They are moreover inclined to be easy going and consider beneath their dignity to do manual labour. The Gujars, Kolis, Chamars and other rank next to the Kanets and the Brahmins. The Gujars keep buffaloes and sell milk and ghee. The Kolis and Chamars, and the Lohars do their other professional work besides cultivating lands. All as a whole are unsophisticated and truthful. They are more amenable to authority than their neighbours in the adjoining British India territory. But in spite of their simplicity, they are unfortunately litigious. The pernicious custom of buying and selling women in all classes, excepting the high caste Rajputs and Brahmins, and early marriages among all save the Rajputs, and the treatment of women as chattels among all classes, exists, and is a disgrace, though unfortunately it is not considered so by the people themselves."

"The cultivated area, in bighas, in the possession of all principal tribes, per Khewat and per owner, will appear from the following table :—

| Tribe.   | Tahsil Sadr<br>area in Bigha. |              | Tahsil Ghamarwin<br>area in Bigha. |              | Total<br>State. |              |
|----------|-------------------------------|--------------|------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|
|          | Per<br>khewat                 | Per<br>owner | Per<br>khewat                      | Per<br>owner | Per<br>khewat   | Per<br>owner |
| Kanets.  | 22                            | 13           | 20                                 | 17           | 23              | 17           |
| Brahmins | 12                            | 5            | 13                                 | 8            | 13              | 8            |
| Rajputs. | 23                            | 14           | 23                                 | 18           | 23              | 17           |
| Gujars.  | 23                            | 18           | 21                                 | 13           | 22              | 16           |
| Others.  | 11                            | 7            | 8                                  | 5            | 9               | 6            |
| Total.   | 19                            | 11           | 16                                 | 12           | 18              | 11           |

A family may be taken to consist of 4 members, that is father and mother and 2 children. It will, therefore, be observed that 11 bighas, or, 2 acres of cultivated land, per family, is a very small holding".

In about 1942-43 the position of the people was as follows :—

“\*Rajputs (both Kanats and higher castes) are the only class in the State who have holdings of an appreciable extent. Their holdings on the average come to about 35 to 40 bighas per family. Land which they cannot cultivate themselves they generally give to tenants. They constitute 32 per cent of the population and as landholders, they are the most prosperous. Next to them come Brahamans who form 27 per cent of the population and own 25 per cent of cultivated land with a holding of about twenty bighas per family. But in a large number of cases they are occupancy tenants in addition liable to pay only two annas in a rupee as rent. Their condition is thus equally satisfactory. Gujars, Kolis and Jats form 8 per cent of the population, but Gujars alone have a bare four bighas per head for cultivation. Chamars and weavers who mean 19 per cent of the population own 6 per cent of cultivated area. In addition, as occupancy tenants or tenants-at-will, they are directly attached to land and also entitled to their share of produce for the services that they render as village craftsmen.

There was no labouring class as such in the State. Agriculture was the mainstay of the people. Out of a total population of 1,10,000 souls, about 74 thousand were peasants-proprietors cultivating their own land. Others are either occupancy tenants or tenants-at-will or dependent on agriculture as village craftsmen. Brahamans supplement their income by performing religious duties. Practically all weavers undertake weaving as a main or a subsidiary occupation. Of the Chamars 3 per cent to 4 per cent are shoemakers or indigenous-tanners. Gujars and Jats have taken to cattle and dairy farming. Jhewars run watermills and make their easy living as millers. Chamars alone could be depended upon to develop into a professional class of labourers if and when the State developed industrially.

**Forced Labour**—Previous to 1922 *begar* or forced labour was prevalent in the State in various forms, but following the declaration of His Highness on the 14th of Magh of that year all kinds of forced labour have been completely abolished”.

The foregoing description, sketchy though it is, by and large still holds good and the standard of living of the majority of people continues to be very poor. It is estimated that family budget of the average agricultural family hardly exceeds four or five hundred rupees a year.

Notwithstanding these realities it may not be imagined that the standard of living has been altogether stagnant and has not registered any change whatsoever. On the contrary, after the merger of States and after the commencement of implementation of Five Year Plans many developments, in the economic sphere, have taken place. Education is fast spreading, means of communication have developed to a

certain extent and are further being improved rapidly, methods of agriculture are being improved rapidly, techniques of animal husbandry are being improved by introduction of better breed and elimination of animal diseases, standard of health of the masses is being raised by providing increased medical facilities, rural and urban industries are being revived and introduced, employment chances are being increased, general development in almost all other sectors is being vigorously pursued, revolutionary land reforms have been made applicable and social reforms are also taking place. Impact of all these developments, changes and reforms is by no means insignificant in the context of raising the standard of living of the people. In fact all these measures are aimed at raising the standard of the people. It is true that in the absence of accurate and detailed evaluation of the effect of these steps it cannot be said with guarantee as to what extent the standard of living has been raised. Nevertheless, one cannot overlook to observe that more new houses are being built, more people are taking advantages of the developed means of communication and transport, more children are attending the schools, an increased number of ailing persons enjoys the facilities of hospitals and medicines, a number of villages enjoy the amenities of electricity and drinking water and more people get now better clothes and food.

### ARTICLES OF CONSUMPTION

In the past, for want of any concrete evidence, it can safely be assumed that the general standard of living was that of the subsistence level. Agriculture was almost the main and the only occupation of the people, means of communication were either non-existent or very little, education was practically next to nothing, avenues of gainful employment were extremely few and social contact with the more advanced people outside the tract was negligible. For all these reasons wants of the people were few and comprised such articles of consumption as could keep the body and soul together and enable the people to pursue their traditional profession and to propagate their species. Agricultural products constituted the primary articles of consumption.

Many developments, with their far reaching results, took place during the current century in the economic, social and political fields and these have in their own way influenced the standard of living of the people and there is now quite an appreciable demand of a variety of articles of consumption. In the foremost category of articles of consumption falls the food. The chief staple food continue to be, the maize and rice. Maize is quite favourite grain constantly in use from September till May. Side by side, in the rice-grown areas, the rice also forms an item of food particularly during the same period though it is a custom that people reserve the clear

unbroken rice for sale and set apart the chipped pieces for their own use. During the remaining part of the year wheat, barley and gram are eaten. Various pulses, grown locally and butter milk are partaken with bread or rice all around the year. The vegetables of various varieties are also included in the menu according to the season of their growth. Chief among these are mustard leaves, potato, *kachalu* (*arum colocasia*) in the winter season and, pumpkins, gourds, lady's finger, raddish, ginger, onions, brinjals, beans etc., during the summer and the rainy seasons. Occasionally, especially on festive occasions, flesh of a goat is eaten with relish. Because of lesser availability of meat, the fish which is available in abundance is usually consumed throughout the year by certain classes of community. Fruits like mango, *papita*, peach, orange and banana are grown here and there and enter into the articles of consumption in a quantity permissible by the productivity which, generally, is not great. With the appearance of modern trends of thought certain new items have found place in the list of articles of consumption. These are biscuits and toffees generally consumed by school going children. Tea, among the beverages is finding favour at an increasing rate all over the district, of course, white sugar being costlier and not always easily available, is readily replaced by *gur* or *shakar* in the preparation of tea. Development of roads and commencement of regular bus service to areas hitherto unconnected with more advanced places has made tea popular rather rapidly. It is not uncommon for a terminus of a bus service to have a few stalls or shops catering to the needs of persons taking tea. *Pakor*s form a supplementary item of this beverage.

Traditional method of smoking, by means of a hookah still persists among the majority of the rural people. Supplies of tobacco are either procured by local cultivation or by import. Younger generation is however not a devotee of hookah as compared to the older one because of availability with ease, of various substitutes of hookah such as *bidis* and cigarettes of numerous varieties. The latter although of not very old standing are yet in extensive use and their demand is on the increase.

The demands of local population cannot be satisfied, from what is locally grown and as such imports are constantly resorted to. The imported articles include sugar, kerosene oil, vegetable oil, condiments, spices and salts, oils, utensils, iron and steel, machines, cloth, articles of luxury, knick-knacks and the like. With the opening of more and more schools demand for books and stationery articles has become quite appreciable. Large numbers of newspapers and periodicals are now circulated in the district.

Various constructional and developmental activities undertaken by different departments have provided a golden opportunity for the local people to earn cash wages though not without detriment to their traditional



cultivation of land. This has obviously, to a great extent increased the paying capacity of a large number of people which has in turn led to more and more consumption of wider variety of goods and services.

The extent of consumption, in the rural areas varies from comparatively well off people to the economically less fortunate. It can be observed that in the sub-conscience of a very large majority of the people there is an inclination to urbanisation in the matter of food, drink, dress and way of living. In the towns the position is slightly different. Here the population comprises either businessmen of all grades or Government officials, high and low. They enjoy comparatively more comforts and even luxuries than the rural people. This is particularly true of Bilaspur where the town itself being new enjoys great amenities. The people live in good houses, ventilated and electrified with necessary provision for water supply etc. They are clean and neat. They consume food articles of superior quality, flesh and fish, vegetables and fruits in comparatively more quantities. The higher classes in the town are in a slightly better state. All enjoy the facility of a cinema, newspaper, libraries, social life etc. They dress themselves gaily and their garments are cut and fashioned according to the latest designs.

### **Family budgets**

So far no family budgets have been framed and studied in any part of the district and as such the foregoing description is not more than what seems to be obvious.

### **Employment Exchange**

Presently there is one Employment Exchange at Bilaspur, established as a sub employment exchange during October, 1960 and upgraded to full-fledged District Employment Exchange during December, 1961. It also maintains statistics of employment which also reveal, to some extent, the general level of employment. The following tables will throw adequate light on the employment situation in the district.

## Registration and Placing Work done in Employment Exchange.

| Particulars  | Number as on 31st December |      |      |      |   |
|--|----------------------------|------|------|------|---|
|  | 1968                       | 1969 | 1970 | 1971 |   |
| 1  | 2                          | 3    | 4    | 5    |   |
| 1. No. of Employment Exchanges   | 1                          | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1 |
| 2. Registrations   | 2819                       | 3163 | 3183 | 4415 |   |
| 3. Placings  | 995                        | 705  | 580  | 307  |   |
| 4. Vacancies notified  | 505                        | 401  | 284  | 144  |   |
| 5. Vacancies filled  | 384                        | 258  | 227  | 100  |   |
| 6. Vacancies outstanding   | 72                         | 120  | 105  | 57   |   |
| 7. Submission  | 2810                       | 3538 | 3649 | 5329 |   |
| 8. Number of Registrants on live register at the end of the year                             | 2830                       | 2419 | 2357 | 3047 |   |
| 9. Number of employers in private/public sectors using the facilities of employment exchange | 67                         | 68   | 53   | 50   |   |

Occupational distribution of persons on the Live Register of Employment Exchange.

| Sl. No.  | Particulars  | 1968  | 1969  | 1970  | 1971  |
|----------|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1        | 2  | 3     | 4     | 5     | 6     |
| 1.       | Professional and technical                             | 73    | 125   | 89    | 81    |
| 2.       | Administrative, Executive and managerial               | 8     | 5     | 6     | 5     |
| 3.       | Clerical and allied workers                            | 66    | 89    | 96    | 99    |
| 4.       | Transport and Communication workers                    | 219   | 212   | 197   | 127   |
| 5.       | Craftsmen  | 208   | 195   | 162   | 101   |
| 6.       | Other skilled workers                                  | 47    | 37    | 81    | 52    |
| 7.       | Un-skilled office workers and other un-skilled workers | 2,209 | 1,755 | 1,726 | 2,582 |
| Total :— |  | 2,830 | 2,419 | 2,357 | 3,047 |

Distribution of applicants on the Live Register of Employment Exchange by level of Education.

| Year | Matric |       | Higher Secondary/F. A. |     |       |       | Graduate in Engineering and Medical |       |       |     | Other graduates (Excluding post-graduates) |       |      |       | Total |  |
|------|--------|-------|------------------------|-----|-------|-------|-------------------------------------|-------|-------|-----|--|-------|------|-------|-------|--|
|      | Men    | Women | Total                  | Men | Women | Total | Men                                 | Women | Total | Men | Women                                      | Total | Men  | Women | Total |  |
| 1    | 2      | 3     | 4                      | 5   | 6     | 7     | 8                                   | 9     | 10    | 11  | 12   | 13    | 14   | 15    | 16    |  |
| 1968 | 705    | 75    | 780                    | 144 | 11    | 155   | 2                                   | —     | 2     | 11  | 5  | 15    | 862  | 91    | 953   |  |
| 1969 | 861    | 93    | 954                    | 147 | 17    | 164   | —                                   | —     | —     | 69  | 5  | 74    | 1077 | 115   | 1192  |  |
| 1970 | 758    | 58    | 816                    | 128 | 8     | 136   | —                                   | —     | —     | 57  | 3  | 60    | 943  | 69    | 1012  |  |
| 1971 | 578    | 27    | 605                    | 179 | 14    | 193   | —                                   | —     | —     | 61  | 3  | 64    | 818  | 44    | 862   |  |

## NATIONAL PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The First Five Year Plan started with effect from 1st of April, 1951, ended in March, 1956. The Second Plan commenced on the 1st April, 1956 and came to an end by March, 1961. The Third Plan which commenced from April, 1961 came to a close in March, 1966. Following the completion of the Third Five Year Plan, there was a gap in the quinquennial planning for three years. In 1969-70 Fourth Five year Plan had its beginning and as usual after five years, Fifth Five Year Plan was started in the district.

The Government of India in May 1952, decided in consultation with the Bilaspur part 'C' State to launch the community development programme. This programme was inaugurated in Bilaspur on 2nd October, 1952, by opening the Sadar block. Thereafter two more blocks were started covering the entire district. Details of these blocks are as below.

| Sl. No. | Name of block | Tahsil    | Present stage | Date of inauguration | Date of conversion from P. E. stage to stage I and from stage I to stage II |
|---------|---------------|-----------|---------------|----------------------|---|
| 1.      | Sadar         | Sadar     | II            | 2-10-52              | Entered into stage II on 1-4-1959   |
| 2.      | Ghamarwin     | Ghamarwin | II            | 2-10-53              | — do —  |
| 3.      | Gherwin       | —do—      | Pre-extension | 1-10-59              |   |

The basis of allotment of blocks, as laid down by the Government of India, is one block for one hundred villages covering a population of 66,000. But owing to peculiar features including the poor means of communication, limited working season and sparse population, this condition was relaxed in the case of Himachal Pradesh territory.

Below the district level the Block Development Officer is in charge of each block, assisted by a team of eight experts (Extension Officers). The work is carried out through the Village Level Workers. For social education there are two officers, a man and a woman. Besides, there is some medical staff to look after health and sanitation programmes. At the village level

there are ten *gram sewaks* and two *gram sewikas* to work in the villages as multipurpose functionaries with an all-round sphere of activity. These are bricks of the whole edifice.

A general idea of the achievements under community development and panchayats programme in the Bilaspur district from 1966-67 to 1970-71 can be had from the figures contained in the following table.

| Item  | Unit | 1966-67 | 1967-68 | 1968-69 | 1969-70 | 1970-71 |
|---|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1   | 2    | 3       | 4       | 5       | 6       | 7       |
| 1. Construction of village paths and roads, | Km   | 67      | 95      | 16      | 46      | 16      |
| 2. Repairs of village paths and roads.      | Km   | 50      | 32      | 78      | 69      | 33      |
| 3. Construction of motorable roads.         | Km   | 15      | 2       | 4       | 3       | —       |
| 4. Compost pits dug.                        | No.  | 2730    | 1806    | 1735    | 1015    | 976     |
| 5. <i>Kuhls</i> repaired and cleaned.       | Km   | 26      | 69      | 94      | 25      | 12      |
| 6. Trees planted.                           | No.  | 12.39   | 1.94    | 33.54   | 13.65   | 15.36   |
| (in thousands)                              |      |         |         |         |         |         |
| 7. Construction of school buildings.        | No.  | 51      | 8       | 1       | 2       | 3       |
| 8. Repair of school buildings.              | No.  | 492     | 5       | 5       | 12      | 11      |
| 9. Irrigational channels constructed.       | Km   | 37      | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| 10. Irrigational channels repaired.         | Km   | 26      | 29      | —       | 26      | 25      |
| 11. Construction of <i>baolis</i> .         | No.  | 197     | 232     | 94      | 44      | 8       |
| 12. <i>Baolis</i> repaired and cleaned.     | No.  | 700     | 178     | 1163    | 390     | 334     |

|                                   |     |      |    |    |     |     |
|-----------------------------------|-----|------|----|----|-----|-----|
| 13. Construction of tanks.        | No. | 44   | —  | 38 | 44  | 8   |
| 14. Repair of tanks.              | No. | 45   | 39 | 44 | 36  | 3   |
| 15. Cow-sheds constructed.        | No. | 35   | 18 | 5  | 26  | 112 |
| 16. Cow-sheds repaired.           | No. | —    | 7  | —  | 1   | 3   |
| 17. Other sheds cleared.          | No. | —    | —  | —  | —   | 109 |
| 18. Villages cleaned.             | No. | —    | —  | —  | 436 | 776 |
| 19. Repair of culverts.           | No. | 1136 | —  | —  | 2   | 134 |
| 20. <i>Pavilions</i> constructed. | No. | —    | —  | —  | —   | 7   |

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# Chapter X

## GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Administrative history of the district makes a very interesting study. It dates back from the advent of the settled form of Government evolved about more than twelve centuries ago when law and order were established and daily life regulated by custom and the rule of jungle practised by the Ruhars and robbers disappeared once for all and colonisation of the area by peace-loving and law-abiding tribes began. As may be expected in a princely State the raja was, from the ancient time, the supreme head of the administration, over which he exercised as general controlling agency. Subordinate to him was the wazier in whose hands rested the practical management of every department. The ruler was the fountain-head of law, forming the highest court of justice which was regularly dispensed in public durbars, wherein the sovereign was assisted by his ministers. There were no regular files, all orders being oral and their execution prompt and swift. As society progressed, the durbar still continued but the area of the State was divided into various tahsils, each under a *kotwal* or a *negi* who entertained certain judicial powers of a minor nature in addition to his own duties as a *faujdar* at one of the forts which was generally the headquarters of the area.

This state of affairs continued till 1863 when Raja Hira Chand divided the State into six tahsils of Bilaspur, Panjgain, Fatehpur, Tiun, Sunhani and Bachhretu each under the charge of a Tahsildar. The maintenance of law and order in these tahsils was the responsibility of the Tahsildars. They had to report their findings to the ruler for final orders.

His successor Raja Amar Chand amalgamated the six tahsils into two divisions on either side of the river Satluj in 1885 and placed a wazier in charge of each. Regular files of cases began to be kept in Tankari script and by 1898, Urdu had been adopted as a court language in conformity with the practice in the rest of the Punjab.

Below the sub-division level the State was anciently divided into twelve parganas which continued, but with lesser administrative importance, as the constituents of tahsils. Tahsil Bilaspur (Sadar) included the parganas of Bilaspur, Bahadurpur, Ratanpur, Fatehpur and Kot Kahlur, tahsil Ghamarwin, comprised parganas of Baseh, Bachhretu, Ghamarwin, Sunhani, Ajmerpur, Tiun and Sariun.



The Tahsildars and Naib-Tahsildars had second and third class judicial powers respectively. There was a munsif to look after the civil work. The wazier exercised the powers of a District Magistrate in criminal matters and of a District Judge in civil. He also had supreme control in revenue matters, but all his orders and decisions were appealable to the raja.

The Ajmer Chandia Mians used to decide all civil and criminal cases arising within their *jagirs*. They had no jails, but any person sentenced to imprisonment or confinement while under trial was turned loose with a heavy piece of wood called *hath* attached to his leg, which prevented him from walking easily.

In 1934 on the retirement of the Diwan from service and disappearance of the Diwanship from the service cadre, the post of Revenue and Judicial Secretary was created. The courts of Collector and District Magistrate were temporarily suspended. The Revenue and Judicial Secretary became the joint head of the Revenue and Judicial Departments and also supervised a number of other departments. On the judicial side, he exercised the powers of the District and Sessions Judge and also enjoyed certain appellate and other powers of a District Magistrate such as a Magistrate of the first class. At the end of the year 1938 the court of the District Magistrate and Collector were revived, the District Magistrate from thence onward continued to exercise all powers vested in him by *Criminal Procedure Code*.

At the beginning of the year 1943 courts of law in the State formed a public service of the highest value and rectitude governed by an established code and procedure impersonal and non-discriminatory.

By 1947 all the departments in the Administration had been much strengthened as would appear from the comparison made in the publication *Bilaspur Marches On*. It says, "Not more than a century ago a unique autonomy in the different well defined divisions of the State prevailed in matters of Police, Judicial, Revenue and Defence administration. Formalities of the office are not more than four score years old. But recent developments in administrative organisation made the system prevailing even a decade before appear primitive and deficient. Compare the present all pervading government machinery with efficient departments served by secretaries, under secretaries, assistant executive officers, inspectors, superintendents of office, head clerks, clerks and so on with a single Diwan (previously existing) assisted by a couple of revenue and as many judicial officers. The frame work of administration in the State can serve as a very adaptable model for the so called smaller administrations. Picture the ruler at the top controlling the different departments with a single golden key like the

mythological sun of Heavens in the Chariot drawn by steeds hardly distinguishable from one another, equally alive to the demands of the public and administrative and political responsibilities as well as to the exigencies of times. Not a detail has been missed. The lowest link of the chain has been given as much importance as the top most. Every little piece forming the machinery received equal attention. The allowance and arrangements have been made for the co-operative and joint effort of the public through their regular association and also of the servants at all stages culminating in an advisory council of secretaries leading them all".

The new changes in India's political condition after Independence resulted in the integration of the Indian States and consequently most of them ceased to exist as separate entities. Here Bilaspur's case for separate existence was based on the fact that an overwhelming majority of its people were opposed to merger with Himachal Pradesh and the interests of the great Bhakra-Nangal Project could only be safeguarded if the State were taken under direct central administration. Detailed negotiations with Government of India resulted in the Cession Agreement of 15th August 1948 under the terms of which the raja handed over the administration to the Government of India who on their part agreed to administer it as a separate Unit. In consonance with these arrangements Bilaspur was accepted as a part 'C' State in the Indian Constitution and was administrated as such up to 1954.

It was administered by the President, acting through a Chief Commissioner appointed by him. There were two tahsils Bilaspur and Ghamarwin containing parganas, Sadar, Bahadurpur, Rattanpur, Fatehpur and Kot Kahlur in the former, and Baseh, Bachhretu, Gherwin, Sunhani, Ajmerpur, Tiun and Sariun in the latter tahsil. With the transformation of the State into one of the units of the Indian Republic the highest court of appeal was that of Judicial Commissioner, who had a District and Sessions Judge working under him, and the usual complement of Magistrates and Sub-Judges. In 1954 the Bilaspur Part 'C' State was merged into Himachal Pradesh and became a district. At that time the general administration machinery comprised the Chief Commissioner, Secretary to the Chief Commissioner and a Finance Officer. Lower ladder of judiciary, on the criminal and civil side, was occupied by the District Magistrate and Tahsildars Ghamarwin and Sadar. The revenue administration was under control of the Collector functioning simultaneously as the District Magistrate. To assist him in the revenue as well as criminal side, there was a Revenue Assistant and Section 30 Magistrate, and a Land Acquisition Officer. For the maintenance of law and order, there was a Superintendent of Police. Other notable functionaries at the State level were Chief Medical Officer, a

Lady Doctor, a Civil Supply Officer, Executive Engineer and a Sub-Divisional Officer. Besides, there was a Forest Officer and an Agriculture Officer.

Even after the amalgamation with Himachal Pradesh, this area remains a separate compact district for the administration purpose. Even till now its two tahsils comprising forty *patwar* circles are intact. The administrative head of the district is the Deputy Commissioner, who looks after general administration, law, order and development of the district. He is the Chief Executive Officer of the district armed with varied powers in order to enable him to function effectively. District level officers of the other departments are though under the immediate charge of their respective heads of departments, yet the Deputy Commissioner exercises general supervision over them. He may, if necessary, call for the assistance of any officer in the district. His position, vis-a-vis, these district level officers is regarded as that of a senior among equals. In fact he is the co-ordinating leader for the various departments in the district and responsible for securing efficient co-operation among them.

In the discharge of revenue functions the Deputy Commissioner still enjoys the original designation and powers of Collector assigned to him in the early days of the British rule in India when by virtue of his duties of collection of land revenue he was amongst the most important functionaries. He still has the collection of the State demand as one of his fundamental functions. He exercises the overall supervision and control in the matter of proper collection, deposit and accounting of the land revenue and allied income. In fact he is the head of the Land Revenue Department at the district level. His major duties include general supervision and control of land records and staff of the Revenue Department, appointments of subordinate officials in accordance with the rules in force, supervision over the collection of revenue, submission of periodical reports to the Financial Commissioner and to the Government and also hearing appeals arising out of the orders and judgements delivered by the subordinate revenue officers in matters connected with land revenue and other allied matters.

Certain magisterial powers of an executive character have been conferred upon him. Virtually he is vested with the powers of the District Magistrate. Besides performing the functions enumerated in the *Criminal Procedure Code*, he is responsible for the administration of several Acts obviously administrative or executive in nature.

Deputy Commissioner generally represents the State in the district. He is the chief spokesman of the Government forming a link between the State and the subject. Everything of importance should pass in the district with his knowledge.

While law and order still continues to be one of his main duties, of late, public relations have assumed an outstanding importance among his functions and responsibilities. In the discharge of his varied and multifarious duties he is assisted in the district by certain officers directly under him. These include two Magistrates, a Land Acquisition Officer, and two Tahsildars. Below the Tahsildars on the revenue side are two Kanungos and sixteen Patwaris in Sadar Tahsil and three Kanungos and twenty-four Patwaris in Ghamarwin Tahsil. Besides these Government servants, *Lambardar* is one of the notable functionaries of the Revenue Department. Collection of land revenue is made through him and he in turn gets five per cent of the land revenue collected. He collects the land revenue twice every year and deposits the amounts in the treasury.

Officers not directly under his control but assisting him in smooth running of the administration may be mentioned now.

**Police Department**—A Superintendent of Police assisted by an elaborate staff as mentioned in Chapter XII of this gazetteer looks after the prevention, detection, investigation of crimes. Apart from the guard duties at the treasury and sub-treasury, in the police stations and at various places at the time of visit of very important personalities to the district are arranged by the Superintendent of Police.

**Forest** : The whole of the district forests make one forest division, under the charge of a Divisional Forest Officer. An Assistant Conservator for soil conservation work is also posted in the division.

**Agriculture** : District Agriculture Officer, assisted by a number of Inspectors looks after the agricultural activities in the district.

**Horticulture** : District Horticulture Officer looks after the horticulture activities in the district. He is assisted by two Horticultural Inspectors and by other necessary subordinate staff.

**Public Works Department** : There are two divisions and nine subdivisions in the district with the usual staff looking after the Department.

**Medical and Public Health** : The Chief Medical Officer is in charge of medical and public health services and the open air jail in the district.

**Development** : Rural development work is looked after by the three Block Development Officers, assisted by the necessary staff.

**Education** : The college affairs are handled by the Principal of the

college, high schools by the Headmasters and schools up to middle standard are managed by the District Education Officer.

**Industries :** Bilaspur being the smallest of all the districts in Himachal Pradesh in the matter of area, has limited industrial activities. The administrative set up for the district comprise of a District Industries Officer and three Extension Officers.

**Panchayats :** This traditional structure responsible for general administration is continuing. In recent times, however, a significant change has been brought about by organisation of Panchayats at the village, the tahsil and the district levels. These representative bodies are taking an increasing part in the general administration and in shaping the future of the community. Many judicial, executive, developmental and financial functions have been entrusted to these representative organisations as detailed *in extenso* in Chapter XIV of this volume. There are two Panchayat Inspectors one in each tahsil, supervised by a District Panchayat Officer.

**Excise and Taxation :** There is an Excise and Taxation Officer assisted by the Inspectorate staff who are responsible for the excise and taxation administration in the district.

**Fisheries :** An Assistant Director of Fisheries looks after fishing and propagating of mirror carp fish in the district.

**Civil Supply and Co-operative :** A District Civil Supplies and Co-operative Officer looks after this work. However, there is a separate subordinate staff for civil supplies.

**Transport :** Bilaspur district is a separate region of Himachal Pradesh Road Transport Corporation. It is under the charge of a Regional Manager who controls public traffic both passenger and goods in the district.

**Employment Exchange :** Employment Exchange at Bilaspur serves the people of this district. The Employment Exchange at Simla can also be availed of if suitable candidates are not available at the district exchange.

**Soldiers Board :** There is an organisation known as the District Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen's Board to look after the welfare of ex-servicemen, serving soldiers and the families of the deceased soldiers. This organisation functions as a semi-government body. The Deputy Commissioner acts as President of the Board with a wholetime Secretary.

**Welfare Department :** Probation Officer-cum-Welfare Officer has been posted in the district to look after the welfare of the people. He ensures the

timely and effective implementation of welfare schemes aiming at the amelioration of the backward and poor people.

**Public Relations Department :** District Public Relations Officer is in-charge of all works pertaining to information, publicity, mass communication and public relations in the district.

**Animal Husbandry :** The District Animal Husbandry Officer helps the local people to improve their cattle breed and protect them against contagious diseases. He is assisted in his work by 9 Veterinary Assistant Surgeons and other subordinate staff.



# Chapter XI

## REVENUE ADMINISTRATION

### LAND REVENUE ADMINISTRATION

#### History of land revenue assessment and management

Right up to 1863, since the founding of the Bilaspur State in about the eighth century i.e., for about 1,100 years the State share, as usual, was realised in kind.

The reliable history of the method of land-revenue assessment, prior to 1863 when some reforms in the land-revenue administration were made by Raja Hira Chand, is hardly available. It has, however, been observed in the report of first regular settlement, started in 1905 and concluded in 1907, that standing crops were appraised and one-third of the total estimated out-turn called '*tarahada*' along with a small amount in cash, haphazardly fixed for each village, was fixed as the State share and realised. In some villages instead of taking one-third share of the gross produce, a fixed amount of grain called *kar* was taken in lump. Crops which could not be conveniently divided in kind, such as cane, cotton and *charri*, were subject to *zabti* rents. Grain both for division and seeds was weighed by wooden measures called *pathas* of various sizes and capacity. A measure with a capacity of two kachcha seers of wheat was called *bohari* and the one with a capacity of one kachcha seer of wheat was known as *thakri*. These measures are almost extinct, though may still be found in a few outlying villages. No share of the grass was taken, but when horses from the stables were sent out to villages during the rains and in the months of *Phalguna* and *Chaitra* to be fed and fattened, the villagers had to supply grass and green wheat *gratis*. Theoretically this system, it is said was good as the zamindar paid according to the actual yield of their land, but in practice the people were subjected to incessant exactions, which resulted in their contributing nearly one-half instead of the authorised one-third of their produce.

In 1867 the parganas of Baseh and Bachhretu, which were in the possession of the British Government, were handed over to the State. Situated on a spur called Dhar Kot, these had originally been taken from the State by 1820. On the annexation of the Punjab, these were treated as British territory. They were summarily settled in 1854 and land-revenue of Baseh was fixed at Rs. 3,929 and that of Bachhretu at Rs. 4,029 making a total of Rs. 7,958. The restoration of the parganas to the State in 1867 was

in recognition of the good services rendered by Raja Hira Chand, subject to the payment to Government of the annual land-revenue demand. The system of taking the land-revenue demand wholly in cash, was introduced at the first regular settlement of 1905-07, by Mian Amar Singh the then Manager and the Settlement Officer of the State.

The settlement was carried out in every respect according to the British system. The entire area was measured systematically, village-wise record prepared, and the rights of the land-holders were determined. The land-revenue was assessed on a certain rate (*paimana*) according to soil classification. The rights of the tenants, and, the rent to be paid by them, to the land owners were formally determined. Apart from consideration about the conditions and classes of soils general economic standard of the people was kept in view and the incidence of land-revenue in the areas adjoining Bilaspur was also compared. As a result of combined considerations a cash demand of about Rs. 1,70,000 was proposed, besides the cesses at the rate of twenty-five per cent of the land-revenue. An increase of twelve per cent of the then existing land-revenue was secured by these new rates. All former miscellaneous demands were discontinued, except the taxes on water-mills and artisans, and, a grazing tax on goats. Rates fixed on the various kinds of soils and the resultant income are given in the following table.

| Whether irrigated or un-irrigated | Name of soil  | Rate per <i>bigha</i> of 900 sq yards |     |    | Resultant revenue Rs. |
|-----------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|-----|----|-----------------------|
|                                   |   | Rs.                                   | As. | P. |                       |
| Irrigated                         | <i>Abi</i> first class  | 0                                     | 12  | 0  | 8,776                 |
|                                   | <i>Abi</i> second class   | 0                                     | 10  | 0  | 7,534                 |
|                                   | <i>Barani dofasli</i><br>( <i>Bakhal anderli</i> )                        | 0                                     | 7   | 6  | 1,05,439              |
|                                   | <i>Barani ekfasli</i><br>( <i>Bakhal baharli</i> )<br>first class         | 0                                     | 4   | 0  | 31,081                |
|                                   | <i>Barani</i> occasionally cropped ( <i>Bakhal baharli</i> ) second class | 0                                     | 2   | 0  | 10,487                |
| Un-irrigated                      | <i>Ghasni</i> (grass fields)  | 0                                     | 1   | 0  | 6,263                 |
|                                   | Occupied waste  | 0                                     | 0   | 6  | 74                    |
|                                   | Total :—  |                                       |     |    | 1,69,754              |



The summary incidence was five annas per *bigha*, twenty-five per cent amounted to Rs. 42,500, but the actually recoverable amount was Rs. 35,000 only because *bethangna* and *bhet sair* could not be realised from certain Brahmans and Rajputs. Cesses were, *bethangna* at twelve and a half per cent, road at two per cent, school at two per cent, dispensary at one per cent, *bhet sair* at one and a half per cent, *lambar,lar* at five per cent, *zaildar* at one per cent, making the total of twenty-five per cent.

By virtue of assessment proposed in 1933, the land revenue rose to 1,97,110. The method of assessment on *ryotwari* system adopted at that settlement, to speak in the words of the then Settlement Officer was as follows. "The division of a tract into assessment circles, in a hilly country like Bilaspur, is neither practicable nor expedient. Each village had, therefore, been treated as a separate unit for the purposes of assessment. All factors bearing on assessment having been fully considered, a demand has been fixed for each village which it can pay without breaking down. A revenue rate suitable for each class of soil of the village has been fixed, the application of which produces the proposed demand. The total demand of each class of land divided by the total area of that class gives the revenue rate of that class for each pargana, tahsil and the whole State. This method which is usually adopted in *ryotwari* settlements, besides, being the most equitable, has the advantage of making the 'baach' work much simpler and easier than it would be if the usual method of framing circle rates, as prevails in the plain districts were adopted."

The total assessment proposed and revenue rates for each class of soil will appear from the table below :—

#### Revenue rate per acre

| Tahsil                      | Proposed<br>assess-<br>ment | Kooli<br>I | Kooli<br>II | Anderli<br>I | Anderli<br>II | Baharli<br>I | Baharli<br>II | Kharetar<br>and<br>Banjar |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|-------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|---------------------------|
| 1                           | 2                           | 3          | 4           | 5            | 6             | 7            | 8             | 9                         |
| (in rupees, annas and pies) |                             |            |             |              |               |              |               |                           |
| Sadar                       | 77,964                      | 4/9/11     | 3/7/5       | 2/15/11      | 2/6/2         | 1/9/—        | —/14/7        | —/5/5                     |
| Gha-<br>mar-<br>win.        | 1,19,146                    | 4/—/7      | 4/—/7       | 2/13/2       | 2/8/3         | 1/7/5        | —/12/3        | —/5/4                     |
| Total                       | 1,97,110                    | 4/7/6      | 3/12/5      | 2/14/2       | 2/7/6         | 1/8/2        | —/13/2        | —/5/4                     |

The all round rate, per acre of cultivation, came to Rs. 2/5/5. With cesses, at twenty-five per cent, the total demand amounted to Rs. 2,46,388. The proposed assessment was fifteen per cent of the gross produce and thirty per cent of net assets. By adding twenty-five per cent cesses, it became 18.7 per cent of the gross produce and thirty-seven per cent of net assets. The enhancement of land-revenue amounted to 9.5 per cent on the then existing old demand of Rs. 1,79,919. Of the total proposed revenue of Rs. 1,97,110, no less than Rs. 49,487 or twenty-five per cent was *jagir* and *muafi* the balance of Rs. 1,47,623 was *khalsa*. The settlement was attended by a rising of the people in 1930 due to some grievances. Some zamindars of Bahadurpur pargana refused to supply free firewood to the settlement staff. The President of the Council who went personally to hold enquiry was presented with long list of grievances which was further augmented subsequently and it soon became clear that this was an organised rising against unfair impositions of the council. At the root of all this agitation was the economic factor which resulted from the slump that had suddenly hit India that year and the people feared that enhancement of land-revenue as a direct result of land settlement should be entirely beyond their means to pay.

Mr. Chandu Lal in spite of his best efforts failed to satisfy the people. Soon disaffection spread to other areas and local police force being unable to cope with the situation, appeals were made to the Resident to send aid. He refused the request but came to Bilaspur soon after to see things for himself. After study of the situation he announced many concessions to the people and exhorted them to let the settlement operations continue in their own interests. But the people were bent on getting the settlement postponed and the rebellion against authority continued unabated. The Resident (Sir James Fitzpatrick) then asked Mr. Chandu Lal to proceed on leave and appointed Mian Man Singh, the Home Minister, as the acting President. He had hoped that the local influence of the latter would quell the revolt but the people knew the Mian's antecedents and refused to listen to him. Thereafter a posse of armed police was called from the Punjab and some of the ring leaders were arrested at a village festival at Namol and brought to Bilaspur. The next day about a thousand persons collected at headquarters and demanded the release of their leaders. They were declared an unlawful assembly and mercilessly lathi charged by the Punjab police, after which they dispersed. The Resident then sent two companies of troops on flag marches to Bilaspur and after three months of constant touring they were able to create peaceful conditions. Nineteen ring leaders had, in the meanwhile, been arrested and sentenced to various terms of imprisonment ranging from two to seven years. A collective fine of rupees twenty-five thousand was also imposed on the villages which had taken the initiative in popular movement.

The settlement held in 1933 is still operative. Permanent record of rights and maps are being kept upto date by the revenue staff according to the *Himachal Pradesh Land Revenue Act, the Himachal Pradesh Land Records Manual*, rules and standing orders. New land brought under cultivation is assessed on the same rates as are prevalent in a particular area. Due to the construction of Bhakra Dam this district has lost over thirty thousand acres of land that is to say about ten per cent of its total area. For this reason the land revenue has decreased. In 1958-59 the total land revenue including cesses and *jagirs* stood at Rs. 2,48,912 but by August 1961 this amount was Rs. 2,05,250. The amount of land-revenue, excluding the cesses and *jagir* money dwindled down considerably and during the year 1971-72 it was Rs. 1,63,330.

### Cesses

Passing reference has been made in the foregoing account about the cesses. They are, however, intimately related to the land-revenue and, therefore, may be outlined here in their own right.

In 1863 Raja Hira Chand adjusted his *pargana* boundaries, established six *tahsils* and converted the revenue in kind of most villages to Rs. 40,229 subsequently raised to Rs. 67,953 as follows.

|                        |            |
|------------------------|------------|
| Cash revenue.          | Rs. 47,636 |
| Value of kind revenue. | Rs. 13,644 |
| Value of ghi.          | Rs. 1,674  |
| Cesses.                | Rs. 1,404  |
| Miscellaneous demands. | Rs. 3,595  |
| <hr/>                  |            |
| Total :--              | Rs. 67,953 |
| <hr/>                  |            |

The cesses were (1) *bethangna* commutation fee for *begar*, the rate of which was not definitely fixed, and (2) *bhet sair*, a *nazrana* payable at the *Sair* festival (1st *Asvina*) by State officials and well-to-do subjects. Miscellaneous demands included (a) *baach* i.e., a payment of cash in addition to grain in villages where the system of dividing the produce was maintained, (b) *lag viz.* a fee which was charged by the erstwhile princely State Government, on the amount of sale of women. This fee was discontinued

later on by the ruler, (c) *khar* viz. commutation of the former supplies of grass, (d) *jora pawa* viz. a cash payment substituted for the free supply of shoes by Chamars and of bed-posts by carpenters to the revenue officials of certain villages on the Naina Devi Dhar, (e) *kanal tamaku* i.e., an impost of five annas a *kanal* on tobacco cultivation in addition to the ordinary revenue, (f) *gharat*, being a tax on watermills varying from four annas to five rupees a mill per annum, (g) *mutarfa*, meaning an annual tax of four annas or eight annas on artisans and (h) *bandha*, i.e. a tax of two annas a house levied on tobacco smokers in Bahadurpur pargana. At the summary settlement cesses had been fixed at Rs. 10-12-0 per cent in addition to the land-revenue. Raja Hira Chand imposed an additional demand of Rs. 6-4-0 per cent as well as *begar* and other customary dues. In 1871 a *patwar* cess of Rs. 3-2-0 per cent was imposed on the whole State, and another cess, *jangshal*, a cash commutation of the old custom of taking half the skin of every dead animal for State accountments, etc. In 1883 the revenue had risen to Rs. 1,09,523 including cesses and miscellaneous demands. The increase was due to more careful management, to the resumption of certain assignments, and to the reclamation of waste land. Five years later this became Rs. 1,42,139 in consequence of further reforms introduced by Raja Amar Chand. He commuted kind revenue into cash in several more villages, increased the rate at which kind revenue was valued, abolished *begar*, imposing instead a universal *bethangna* at twenty-five per cent, of the revenue allowed large areas of forest and waste to be broken up, on which lands a heavy cess was imposed and instituted a new cess *paya* at Rs. 3-2-0 per cent. In lieu of the old custom obliging zamindars to sell grain to the State, twenty-five per cent cheaper than market rates, fixed the rate of *bhet sair* at two per cent on the revenue, and levied a new tax on all menials at two annas a house. Raja Bijai Chand on attaining his majority reduced the *bethangna* from twenty-five to 18½ per cent and in 1902 just before the State came under Government management, revenue, cesses, and miscellaneous demands amounted to Rs. 1,41,593. In 1908 this had increased by Rs. 5,534 due to assessment of newly broken land, land held by *lambardars*, conversion of grain into cash, and resumption of assignments.

### Begar

*Begar* was originally of two kinds, regular and occasional. For regular *begar*, each *\*bhaoli* had to supply one *begari* who was on duty for at least one month in the year. There were one or two *betwals* in every *pargana*, whose duty it was to collect *begaris*, and these were assisted by peons. The *begaris*

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\*The unit of assessment varying between twelve and twenty *Lakhoas*. A *Lakhao* was equal to Rs. 3-12-0.

had to collect grass, fuel, charcol, etc. for the palace and other State requirements, furnish charpoy beds, build State houses and attend at Bilaspur or the forts for general duty. Ordinarily a *begari* got no remuneration of any kind for his services, but he was supplied with a daily ration, if he accompanied the raja or an official on tour, or if he was employed on building work. Chandel Rajputs, Brahmans, and *Parohits* (priests) were exempt from regular *begar*, and the raja could by special order, exempt any other person or class of persons. Occasional *begar* consisted of supplying fuel, grass, milk, charcoal etc., on the occasion of marriages, funerals, on the tour of high officials. Raja Amar Chand abolished ordinary *begar* in 1883 and imposed *bethangna* at twenty-five per cent of the land-revenue in commutation. Occasional *begar* continued, *begaris* being paid three annas a day outside the State.

**Abolition of regular begar**—As has been already stated Raja Bijai Chand reduced *bethangna* to 18½ per cent and in the settlement of 1907 it was again reduced to 12½ per cent at which rate it continued. It was then payable, however, only by zamindars as were not exempt from *begar* service in the olden days. A good many Brahmans and almost all the Rajputs were exempt from the payment of the *bethangna*. But it was remarkable that though the cess was not paid by them on their old ancestral holdings, it was paid on all *nautor* lands acquired by them. It appears that in his budget speech of 1947 the raja of Bilaspur, in fulfilment of his promise, made earlier, declared complete exemption of *bethangna* with effect from the *Rabi* of the said year. The total amount of *bethangna* by that year was estimated to be twenty-two thousand rupees per annum. Thus this traditional cess came to an end in the year 1947.

**Bhet sair**—Another imposition, *bhet* just akin to *nazrana*, was originally a *nazar* offered by the principal officials *lambar-dars*, *zaildars*, and well-to-do zamindars, on the first of *Asvina* every year, being an auspicious day in all the hill States. It was recovered in fixed sums from each village. The tradition about the origin of this imposition was that once a member of chief's family died on the first of *Asvina* and since then instead of being recovered on the first of *Asvina* it began to be recovered at the Dussehra durbar which was usually held about the middle or the end of *Asvina*. The practice in 1933 was that if the chief was at the headquarters, durbar was held when all officials showed *nazars* which were touched and accepted. The rate was ten per cent of the salaries. It was, however, recovered at the rate of one-eighth per cent from all villages except those owned by the high caste Mian Rajputs, claiming descent from Raja Sultan Chand, Kalyan Chand, Tara Chand and Ajmer Chand. This was left unchanged during the settlement of 1933. Obviously with the end of the princely regime this tax also ceased to be realised.

Besides the land-revenue and cesses there were other impositions too, of which the following deserve a mention :—

**Nazrana :** The State derived a certain income from *nazrana*. This was levied on sales of land at the rate of rupees six-and-a-quarter per cent of the price and at the rate of five per cent on mortgages. If a land-holder died childless, his heirs, within the fifth generation, were allowed to succeed, but if there were none, the land escheated to the State and *nazrna* at the rate of rupees five per *bigha* was payable by any one who wished to get possession of it. Similarly five rupees a *bigha* were charged as *nazrana* on waste land acquired for cultivation.

**Malikana :** Prior to the settlement of 1933, if a *gharat* was constructed on land owned by the State, the owner was not liable to pay any rent of the land. During the settlement it was proposed to levy a *malikana* of one-and-a-half anna per stone, per annum, on mills working for not more than four-and-a-half month in the year and two annas per stone on all others, for the State land occupied by them.

**Marriage and death contributions :** Though no customary dues were levied in Bilaspur for the expenses of marriage and death ceremonies in the raja's family, yet contributions were made on such occasions by the raja's own relatives.

**Tax on gold washing :** A tribe, named. Daola, earned precarious livelihood by washing gold in the Satluj and other streams. If a man made four annas a day he was considered to do well. In Baseh and Bachhretu parganas the Daolas paid a fee of thirty rupees a year to the State for plying their trade. In the rest of the State the custom used to be for the Daolas to give six tolas and eight *mashas* of gold a year. By 1933 they paid a lump sum of ninety-three rupees instead.

### Jagirs

Account of land-revenue assessment will be incomplete without mentioning the *jagirs* and *muafis*. Amount on *jagirs* and *muafis* is a legitimate part of the land-revenue yet it was, as it still continues to be, enjoyed by certain individuals to the exclusion of the State.

The *jagirs* represent grants made about one hundred and fifty years ago by various rajas to support their younger sons. As might be expected, the individual *jagir* holdings, in many cases, have become very minute. The *jagirdars* are known by the name of the raja who made the grant; for example, the Ajmer Chandia Mians are descended from Raja Ajmer Chand

(1692-1738). Three of their joint *jagirs* situated at Bargaon, Raghunathpura and Rampur are worth, respectively about Rs. 2,500, Rs. 6,500 and Rs. 4,000.

These *jagirdars*, in the past, had no obligations except to present a small *nazrana* at the Dussehra festival and to render military and other service when called upon. None of this class of *jagirdars* undertook agricultural work with their own hands. The second class, viz. Kahluria Mians were the Sultanchandias, Kalyanchandias and Tarachandias. Their families had multiplied, and with one or two exceptions the individual share of each *jagirdar* was extremely small. Many of them worked in their own fields, but they did not touch the plough. They paid no *nazrana*, but, were required to render service. Other Rajputs, holding *jagirs*, were mostly Chandlas. They, too, had suffered from multiplication and sub-division and, because they ploughed their fields with their own hands contrary to the custom of their tribe, they had to pay a certain percentage of their *jagir* income as *nazrana* to the raja. The rights and privileges of all *jagirdars* and their general status were by about 1913 under investigation, and position as to the perpetuity or otherwise of the grants was in the melting pot. But, in accordance with the usual custom in the hills, the *jagirs* to ranis, etc., and all *muqfis*, except those to temples continued at the pleasure of the raja. Temple *muqfis* were usually maintained so long as the building was kept up, the raja having the power to appoint and dismiss the temple managers.

Shri P. L. Chandu Lal the then Diwan of erstwhile Bilaspur State, in the assessment report, 1929-33 expressed his opinion with regard to *jagirs* and *muqfis* as follows, "I am of the opinion that in the fulness of time, it may be found possible to examine the case of each *jagir* and *muqfi* to see which may justly be resumed and which may be reduced, and which again are those which may be retained in perpetuity and which are those which may be automatically reduced by a fixed percentage on the death of the present holders."

Mian Amar Singh had stated in the settlement report 1907 that in the case of first class *jagirdars*, if they died sonless, leaving no reversioners within three generations, the *jagir* lapsed to the State, but if they left reversioners within three generations, they succeeded on the payment of one year's assignment of land revenue, as *nazrana* to the State. In the case of second and third class *jagirdars* and *muqfidars*, reversioners within five degrees succeeded and if such reversioners did not exist the *jagir* and *muqfi* lapsed to the State. But to Shri P. L. Chandu Lal this appeared to be only an opinion as to what course was to be followed in the future in event

of a *jagirdar's* dying sonless. This did not reveal what had actually been the custom in the past. Raja Bijai Chand disposed of this important question by his *Robkar* dated the 8th *Sawan S. 1978* (1921), in which he ruled that in the case of a *jagirdar* or *muafidar* dying sonless, his widow only would succeed for life, on her death, the *jagir* or *muafi* would be resumed.

Certain successions followed this decision. Mian Narotam Singh died before the regular settlement, leaving four widows besides reversioners within three generations. The widows succeeded him in equal shares to the exclusion of the reversioners. Mian Bilbader Singh died leaving a widow who succeeded him to the exclusion of a near reversioner. On the death of his widow in 1911 the *jagir* was resumed. Therefore, if a *jagirdar* died sonless the practice was that his widow succeeded. The reversioners, near or remote, did not succeed in any case. In the case of a *jagirdar* leaving more than one widow, all got the *jagir* and *muafi* in equal shares. But on the death of a widow, her share lapsed to the State and did not go to the widow or widows surviving.

#### Assignments of land revenue

By 1910 twenty-seven per cent of the cultivated area was revenue-free, as recorded in the following statement :—

| Description of assignments                                | Total area<br><i>Bighas</i> | Cultivated area<br><i>Bighas</i> |
|---|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Assignments to ranis and members of the raja's household. | 24,482                      | 17,370                           |
| <i>Jagirs</i> of the Ajmer Chandia Mians.                 | 32,266                      | 25,761                           |
| <i>Jagirs</i> of the second class Kahluria Mians.         | 12,402                      | 9,215                            |
| <i>Jagirs</i> of other Rajputs.                           | 28,957                      | 21,462                           |
| <i>Muafis</i> to temples.                                 | 13,523                      | 10,741                           |
| Charitable assignments to Brahmans.                       | 43,014                      | 33,037                           |
| Other assignments.  | 12,162                      | 8,425                            |
| Total :—  | 1,66,906                    | 1,26,011                         |



Land revenue of *jagirs* and *muafis* in 1933 amounted to Rs. 49,409, i.e. twenty-nine per cent of the total land revenue of the State. In 1942 it came down to Rs. 39,420, viz. nineteen per cent of the gross land revenue, the rest having been resumed.

In the year 1938 the question of *jagirs* and *muafis* was thoroughly examined and rules regulating their grants and resumptions were framed. In the lights of these rules cases which were gross infringement of the law of equity, justice and good conscience were specially tackled. *Jagirs* and *muafis* which had been obtained by misrepresentations or unfair means were resumed. In the main there were at that time three kinds of *jagirs* and *muafis* including (a) free-holders, being thirty-six per cent of the total, enjoying a rental of Rs. 14,378, (b) assignees of revenue of a particular land, sixty per cent of the total with a rental of Rs. 23,560, and (c) assignees of gross sums of money, four per cent of the total with a *jagir* of Rs. 1,480.

Again, seventy-nine per cent of these assignments were in perpetuity, twenty-one per cent or thereabout for two to three generations only and a negligible number for the duration of the settlement.

Even at present the position of rights and privileges enjoyed by the *jagirdars* and *muafidars* are almost the same as they obtained as far back as 1910. As regards the numerical strength of the assignees the free-holders i.e., persons owning land from whom land-revenue is not realised are as many as 6,681. They form 76.5 per cent of the total number of assignees and enjoy a rental of Rs. 17,722.93. The second class comprises of assignees who receive land-revenue from the landowners through the *lambardars* instead of its being paid into the Government treasury. They are 1,860 in number forming 21.3 per cent of the total and are in receipt of a rental of Rs. 31,347.26. In the third group falls the assignees receiving fixed cash. They are smallest in number being one hundred and eighty-four and form 2.1 per cent of the total number of assignees with *jagirs* of the value of Rs. 1584.74.

### Management

**Revenue Officers:** The Raja was the supreme head of the then administration, over which he exercised a general controlling agency. Subordinate to him was the wazier in whose hands rested the practical management of every department. He had supreme control in revenue matters, but all his orders and decisions were appealable to the raja. He was responsible to superintend revenue collections and was assisted by a number of subordinate officials. All these were remunerated by revenue free grants of land and they were entitled to levy free supplies and a half yearly

cash payment (*lag*) from the villagers. Revenue officials were also responsible for law and order in their respective charges and held judicial powers. The important revenue officials were *Mehr* or *Lambardar*, *Mukadam*, *Chaukidar*, *Sathoi*, *Kardar*, *Kuthiala*, *Muharrir*, *Negi*, *Palsara* and peons. Duties and remunerations of these village functionaries may now be discussed.

Before the first regular settlement (1907) the institution of *Lambardars* popularly known as *Mehrs*, existed in each village. They recovered and deposited the land revenue in the State treasury for which duty they used to get from the zamindars *panjotra* twice every year at the rate of three pies per rupee. In addition to this the State also remunerated them and they were also exempt from the payment of a cess known as *bethangna*. The method of their appointment was not proper. After alternative years, the highest payee of *nazrana* could get the appointment. Inexperienced persons were thus appointed. The land-revenue was recovered with great difficulty by them. Often the corrupt and clever *Lambardars* exacted the amount of *nazrana* from the land owners. The *Lambardars* had invariably some nominally assessed holdings in each village, locally called *khetri*, produce whereof was appropriated by them. After four harvests, land-revenue of *khetri* land was recovered from them and the amount was called *mehrana*. The financial condition of *Lambardars* (*Mehrs*) was deplorable and the amount of remuneration received by them during their entire tenure was almost equal to the *nazrana* paid by them at the time of their appointment.

After the conclusion of the first regular settlement of 1907 the post of *Lambardar* was declared hereditary. *Panjotra* payable to a *Lambardar* at the rate of five per cent of the total demand was fixed and the title of *Mehr* was dropped altogether in favour of *Lambardar*.

*Sathoi* (appraiser) was needed when the payment of land revenue was almost entirely in kind. The primary function of *Sathoi* was to appraise standing crops and to determine the State share. For this service he was paid by each cultivator two annas, which the *Sathoi* and the *Muharrir* divided between them.

When the crops had been appraised by the *Sathoi*, *Kardar*, *Kuthiala*, *Muharrir* and several peons came to take possession of the State share, which was either sent at once to the granary, or stored in the house of headman. The party of officials lived on free food supplies and the *Kuthiala* used to take one *patha* (two seers) of grain from the cultivators.

The principal duties of *Palsara* and *Negi* were to protect the forts and realise the arrears of land-revenue. Their posts were, however, abolished in 1903, and instead some peons and process servers were appointed. The

posts of *Palsaras* and *Negis* were generally offered to Kanets and Rajputs or Rathis respectively. The subordinate *chaukidars* paid them four annas half-yearly.

The institution of *chaukidars* was unknown before 1903. In 1904 *chaukidars* were appointed for the first time. The appointment was subject to payment of rupees five in lump sum as *nazrana*. They were paid five kachcha seers of grain per house-hold at each harvest, as their remuneration. The *chaukidars* had to offer, as a rule, one rupee as *nazr* to the ruling chief on the occasion of *Dussehra* festival. The office of *chaukidar* was not hereditary. The State provided uniform to the *chaukidar* in every third year. *Chaukidara* rules were framed and published.

The aforementioned functionaries meant for the revenue administration continued as long as the conclusion of the first regular revenue settlement in 1907. The Settlement Officer, in his settlement report made certain recommendations with a view to re-organising the revenue administration, more or less on the pattern of adjoining and well advanced State of the Punjab. These recommendations were with regard to the method of appointment of *Lambardars*, *chaukidars*, *Zaildars*, *Safed Posh*, *Rakhas* and *Patwaris*. Hitherto there were only three or four *Patwaris* and *Patwar*-circles had not been carved out. The resultant re-organised revenue administration was as described in the following lines.

The raja, as usual, continued to be the head of the revenue administration assisted, in this sphere, by a wazier, exercising supreme control in revenue matters though his orders and judgements were, if necessary, appealable to the raja. The State was divided into two tahsils each placed under the charge of a Tahsildar responsible to the wazier.

The office of *Lambardar* was declared as hereditary after the conclusion of the first regular settlement of 1907 in conformity with the pattern of the Punjab State. The appointment was subject to the condition that ten per cent of the assessed land revenue had to be paid as *nazrana* to the State. The *panjotra* (remuneration) was fixed at the rate of five per cent at the total demand assessed. Every succeeding *Lambardar* had also to pay the *nazrana* amount on taking over the office. Power of appointments and dismissal of *Lambardars*, exercised by the *Jagirdars* was withdrawn and vested exclusively in the State. Each *Lambardar* earning less than Rs. 25.00 as *panjotra* was required to pay a *nazr* of one rupee to the durbar, at the time of durbar *Dussehra*; those earning more than Rs. 25.00 had to pay double the amount. Similar amounts payable by *Lambardars* of the villages assigned to certain members of royal families and temples were paid to the respective assignee instead of the State. The principal duties, amongst others,

of *Lambardars* included the realisation of land revenue in two instalments i.e. on first *Magha* and on first of *Sravana* each year.

The posts of *Palsaras* and *Negis* were abolished in the first regular settlement and instead *Zaildars* were appointed in each pargana. They were appointed from amongst the *Lambardars* in consultation with the concerned cultivators. The office of *Zaildar* was not hereditary. At the time of appointment, a *Zaildar* had to pay *nazrana* ranging from fifty to hundred rupees and in lieu he was awarded an ordinary *khillat* and, a sanad by the ruler. It was also obligatory for the *Zaildar* to pay to the ruler a *nazrana* of rupees five on the occasion of *Dussehra* durbar. The remuneration of the *Zaildar* was fixed at the rate of one per cent of the total assessed land revenue of a pargana. The primary duties, amongst others, of *Zaildars* included to report to the police or to the magistrate about the heinous crimes and of bad characters of his circle and to assist in the investigations and combating of the crimes; and to keep a watch on the *Lambardars* and *Patwaris* that they are performing their duties diligently; to assist the revenue officers in the matter of crop inspections, assessment of land revenue and other general land revenue administration as may be required from him; to report about the repairs of Government buildings situated in his circle, to give publicity to the Government orders and to exert his influence in securing compliance of such orders and to assist the touring officers.

Without any specific duties assigned to *Safed Posh*, there were certain persons regarded respectable for their rendering valuable assistance in the maintenance of State administration and in the conduct of revenue settlement. They were eight persons, each in receipt of forty rupees per annum, from the State in lieu of their praise-worthy services.

*Rakha* (Forst Guard) is remarkable here for the reason that he was paid primarily in kind by the cultivators.

After the conclusion of the second settlement in 1933, the revenue administration was re-organised. A Diwan, assisted by a Collector and two Tahsildars, one for each tahsil, administered the Revenue Department under the supervision, control and direction of the *Mjlas-i-Aliya*. On the retirement of the Diwan in 1934 the court of the Collector was abolished and a Revenue and Judicial Secretary appointed instead. In 1936 the Collector's Court was revived with the appointment of a revenue trained officer with additional powers of a District Magistrate. In 1939 when State administration was re-organised by the raja and some radical changes were effected including the separation of executive from the judiciary, relieving the revenue officers of their criminal powers and placing a Revenue Secretary as their head, the District Magistrate's and Collector's Court had only one presiding officer

who was to continue till the new system was firmly established.

The *Ijlas-i-Alla* was the final court of appeal and the highest revenue office. Raja's secretary in the Revenue Department was the head of the revenue staff, as also the presiding officer of the Revenue Secretary's Court, hearing appeals and revisions against the Collector's decision. Next in order were the courts of two Tahsildars.

As Revenue Officers the Tahsildars were also responsible for the inspection of the work of the field staff and verification and correction of the records, on the spot. They were, therefore, regularly out on tour usually for fifteen days every month. There were fifty-five circles of *Patwaris*, each covering about nineteen villages, and, on the average, 15,500 *khassra* numbers. There were six field Kanungos to supervise their work. The *Patwaris* and field Kanungos were State servants, drawing their pay from the State treasury. There were 1,210 headmen of villages, each village having one or more. The village headmen and *Zaildars* received five and one per cent respectively of the land revenue collected by them. To assist the village administration eighty-six posts of *chaukidars* had been created. Service of the *chaukidars* had been regulated by State Village Watchmen Rules of 1998 BK, (1941). They drew a fixed salary then instead of a contribution in kind from villagers as was formerly the case.

For maintenance of accounts and realisation of land revenue arrears, separate staff had been appointed. Two arrear clerks, one for each tahsil, and twenty-two peons wholly attended to that work. Besides, there was an up-to-date land records office staffed by an office (Sadr) Kanungo, a *Naib Sadr* Kanungo and two Assistants. The office contained numerous maps, records of rights and quadrennial *jambandis* and all settlement records. It maintained registers giving latest information about village revenue staff and their work. The record was kept village-wise. The renewal of records such as maps etc., was also done by this office. In 1941, one hundred and eight maps were renewed.

The Revenue Law and Procedure of the British Punjab had been adopted *mutatis mutandis* in the State. The revenue officers, their courts and the field staff followed the *Punjab Land Revenue Act*, the *Punjab Tenancy Act* and also the instructions and Standing Orders; etc., contained in Land Revenue Manuals duly modified and adapted to suit local conditions. All *Patwaris* and field *Girdawars* were supplied with a copy of the *Land Records Manual* and required to adhere to the instructions contained therein. The system of granting copies of revenue papers and records was regulated and brought up-to-date in 1939.

The aforementioned staff and procedure continued in the State till its merger into Himachal Pradesh in 1954. After the merger, the revenue administration has been remodelled in its entirety after the pattern of the Punjab and thus brought at par with other districts in Himachal Pradesh. On the apex of the revenue administration in the district, is the Deputy Commissioner who still shoulders, as of lore, the principal duty of recovery of the State share of land revenue. For the discharge of duties of recovery of land revenue as also for the maintenance of accounts and proper and up-to-date land record and the land revenue statistics he is known as the Collector. To assist him in the function of the collection of land revenue he has been provided with an elaborate staff, including two Sub Divisional Magistrates, two Tahsildars, two *Naib-Tahsildars*, four Field Kanungos, a Sadr Kanungo, a *Naib Sadr Kanungo*, a *Moharrir Mal*, two office Kanungos and forty *Patwaris*. Special staff was engaged temporarily in connection with the large scale acquisition of land for Bhakra Dam in about two hundred and fifty-six villages of the district and resettlement of about seventeen thousand oustees from the Bhakra Dam area.

#### **Present system of survey, assessment and collection of land-revenue**

**Survey**—The system of survey on which the last settlements in 1907 and 1933 were effected was the plain table survey by triangulation, suitable for the hilly areas, and as is also generally followed in the Punjab. The settlement held in 1933, is still operative. Permanent record of rights in land with its maps are being kept up-to-date by the revenue staff according to the instructions contained in the *Himachal Pradesh Land Revenue Act*, and, rules and standing orders issued by the Financial Commissioner, Himachal Pradesh.

**Assessment**—The present system of assessment in Himachal Pradesh is identical to that in the Punjab. But in Bilaspur district, the last settlement was conducted as far back as 1933 and, notwithstanding the adoption of the *Punjab Land Revenue Act* and rules, providing for twenty-five per cent demand of the net assets, the State demand at that time was fixed at a little higher than one-third of the assets as has already been described. The entire assessment is in cash. No assessment circles were created during this settlement, every village being assessed on its own merits. Revenue rates are, therefore, different for different villages. New land brought under cultivation is assessed similarly.

**Collection of land-revenue**—At present the collection of land-revenue is made through the agency of village *lambardar* (Headman) on payment of the usual commission at the rate of five per cent of the collection. The commission is called *pa ijotra*. The total demand is recoverable in bi-annual instalments at the end of each harvest. Before the *Lambardars* set out for

the recovery of land-revenue from each land-owner it is the duty of *Patwaris* to prepare each year a *bachh*, papers showing the demands due from each contributor to the village *bachh*. In villages subject to fluctuating assessment the *bachh* papers are prepared after the *girdawari* on which the assessment is based. In the case of other villages these papers are prepared immediately after the *kharif girdawari*. The *bachh* papers are prepared in duplicate, one copy for the use of the *Lambardar* and the other for that of the *Patwari*. The *bachh* papers having been prepared are subject to scrutiny by the Field Kanungo who compares the *Patwari's* copy with the last *jamabandi* and mutation register and affix his signatures on it in token of its correctness. Similarly, he compares the copy intended for the use of the *Lambardars* and signs the same after he has satisfied himself about its correctness. Officers superior to the Field Kanungo too are required to check some of the entries in the *fard bachh* and sign them. The *Lambardars* take charge of their respective *bachh*-papers and start collection of land-revenue. When revenue collections are in progress, the *Patwaris* are required to furnish any information and explanation of accounts that may be required to facilitate the collection. The *Patwari* himself is, however, forbidden to receive any payment or to take any part in the collection of the land-revenue. All he is required to do, if necessary, is to assist the Headmen in giving acknowledgements for payments and furnish them with a memorandum commonly called *arz arsal* when they proceed to the treasury for crediting the revenue. If and when the demand is remitted by money order the *Patwari* is required to complete the coupons by entering the amounts to be paid under each head of demand and by signing it. *Lambardar* deposits the total land-revenue in the tahsil or the district treasury, as the case may be. He may seek assistance by the revenue officers, for recovery of arrears, if any. The Tahsildars, and the Collector take necessary measures to recover the arrears according to the modes of recovery and by adopting even coercive if necessary processes mentioned in the *Land Revenue Act*. The entire demand in this district is easily recovered and usually the arrears are either nil or insignificant.

## LAND REFORMS

### Relations between land-lords and tenants

According to para 30 of the settlement report of Bilaspur, held in 1907, a village-wise list of the rights of tenants was compiled. Cases of the tenants cultivating a particular holding for more than twelve years and whose rights were disputed were decided by the Settlement Officer himself. But the tenants holding for less than twelve years or whose rights were not in dispute were regarded, by the Deputy Superintendent, as non-occupancy

tenants. As many as 13,095 entries were made in the list of rights, 9,774 occupancy tenants with 7,544 holdings were recorded and the rest were entered as non-occupancy tenants. Section 83 of the same settlement report mentions that previously, there were no occupancy tenants and that tenants were so styled in that settlement for the first time. It is also mentioned that the occupancy tenants, paying land revenue at owners rate, were required to pay *haq biswadari* to the land-lord at the rate of two annas per rupee of the land revenue. In case of *batai* the *haq biswadari* was fixed at two seers of grain per maund etc. The position of tenants by the next land-revenue settlement held in 1933 became clearer. According to the assessment report drawn at that time the cultivated area in the possession of tenants-at-will was twenty-three per cent of which eleven per cent gave rent in cash and twelve per cent in kind. The table below shows the cash rents, per *bigha*, paid by tenants, on unmixed irrigated and *barani* lands :—

|           | Irrigated |     |     | Barani |     |     |
|-----------|-----------|-----|-----|--------|-----|-----|
|           | Rs.       | As. | Ps. | Rs.    | As. | Ps. |
| Sadar     | 1         | 3   | —   | —      | 10  | 5   |
| Ghamarwin | 1         | 10  | 11  | —      | 10  | 3   |

But the figures relate the very small areas of a few villages only in which it was found possible to obtain any information regarding purely irrigated and *barani* lands. Moreover cash rents were not competitive and did not indicate the real renting value of land. Of the twelve per cent cultivated area held by *batai* paying tenants-at-will, fifty-nine per cent paid one-half *batai* three per cent,  $\frac{2}{5}$  *batai* : thirty-three per cent, one-third *batai* ; one per cent, less than one-third *batai* and four per cent at fixed lump-rates. In the case of *batai* less than one-half, tenants gave *begar* and small sums of money by way of cesses to owners. This was specially so in the case of Rajput owners. At the settlement of 1907, the prevailing *batai* rate was held to be one-third, one-half being considered rare. In 1933, it was the other way round. One-half was the prevailing rent, one-third and less being rare.

**Occupancy tenants :** Occupancy tenants held seventeen per cent of the total cultivation. The majority gave cash rents at revenue rates plus *malikana* at two annas per rupee of revenue. The *batai*-paying occupancy tenants were few, holding three per cent of the total cultivated area and sixteen per cent of the cultivated area held by occupancy tenants. They were almost exclusively the tenants of Rajput *jagirdars* in their *basi* or *jagir* villages and gave one-third *batai* in addition to *begar* and cesses in cash. A very small number gave even one-half *batai*, inclusive of cesses which were



exacted from them, the *batai* share paid to the owners was not less than one-half. The *begar* given by occupancy tenants was called locally *bootta*. Each household of an occupancy tenant whether he held small area or large was supposed to give five *boottas* in one year to his land-lord. But the land-lord had to feed him. A *bootta* was held to be equivalent to eight annas in some of the revenue judicial cases decided in the Bilaspur courts. But there was no uniformity in the exaction of the curious cess. Much depended on the arrogance or meekness of the land-lord, and the burden bearing capacity of the unfortunate tenant. Whether the *bootta* imposition was right or wrong and whether all tenants submitted to it or not, it was an important factor to be considered in the enhancement of rent cases which had then begun to be instituted, by the owners, in the State courts.

It will be observed that whatever on account of the rents was paid and what on account of cesses, *begar* and *boottas*, the actual rent in kind of the occupancy tenants could scarcely be considered below one-half. For the purpose of the preparation of the produce estimate, one-half *batai* was taken as the prevailing rate of *batai* rent. By 1942-43 the position of tenants in brief was that one per cent of the cultivated land was held by tenants who either paid a nominal rent or none whatever. Seven out of every eight occupancy tenants paid *malikana* which was generally and as usual two annas per rupee of the land-revenue assessed. The remaining one-eighth paid in kind, which amounted to about one-third of the crop produced. Non-occupancy tenants paid according to terms agreed upon by the parties, and might consist in cash payment or payment in kind or even in services rendered. In the year 1942, twenty-seven per cent of the total area under cultivation was held by non-occupancy tenants, thirteen per cent of whom paid rent in kind, generally at the rate of one-third of the produce. In places, *batai* system was in vogue where the owner of the land took half of the produce but this happened with respect to rich and irrigated tracts and there, too, the net produce only was divided after allowing for seed deductions and share of the village menials which approximated to seven and a half per cent of the gross produce. The following table illustrates the position of tenants as it stood in about 1942.

| Total cultivate area | <i>Khud-Kasht</i> | Total area under tenants | T e n a n t s     |             |          |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|-------------|----------|
|                      |                   |                          | N. t.-rent paying | Rent-paying |          |
|                      |                   |                          |                   | Occupancy   | At will  |
| 4,34,353             | 2,41,667          | 1,92,687                 | 5,403             | 70,283      | 1,17,001 |
| 100                  | 56                | 44                       | 1                 | 16          | 27       |

By the time the State of Bilaspur was merged into Himachal Pradesh great attention had begun to be paid towards the amelioration of the conditions of the tenants all over Himachal Pradesh. Many States had adopted such measures that had drastically changed the old relationship between the tenants and the land-lords. By 26th January, 1955, a most outstanding legislative measure was adopted in Himachal Pradesh by the enforcement of the *Himachal Pradesh Abolition of Big Landed Estates and Land Reforms Act 1953*.

Other enactments passed and calculated to aim at land reform were the *Consolidation of Holdings Act 1953*, the *Bhoodan Act 1954*, and the *Arable Land Control Act*. Before coming into being of the *Himachal Pradesh Abolition of Big Landed Estates Act*, non-occupancy tenants could be easily ejected by the land-lords and even occupancy tenants, sometimes could be thrown out of possession. The said *Act* ensured the security of tenure to the tenants on their holdings and ejectments can now only be made in the case of an occupancy tenant on certain specific grounds.

There were about seventy-six big landed estates that had been hit by section 27 of the *Himachal Pradesh Abolition of Big Landed Estates and Land Reforms Act*. These big estates covered an area of about 3,064 acres and their annual land-revenue worked out to be about Rs. 4,750. It is estimated that there were about 38,213 tenants, within the district, and many of them have now acquired on payment of compensation, the right, title and interest of the landowner in the land of the tenancy held by them. Nevertheless, from what has been done so far the indications are that certain amount of improvement in the social life of the people is bound to occur with the passage of time.

Notwithstanding anything contained in the *Abolition of Big Landed Estates and Land Reforms Act* or in any agreement or any decree or order of a court, the maximum rent payable by the tenant for any land held by him cannot exceed one-fourth of the crop of such land or of the value of such produce. The value of the crop or rent, when necessary, is determined by the Collector in accordance with the rules, framed by the Financial Commissioner.

Other notable features of the new legislation concerned with the land reforms are that the intermediaries between the tillers of the land and the State are to be eliminated, occupancy and non-occupancy tenants are to be restricted, in certain cases, to lease land of tenancy. The *Act* also provides for the vesting of rights of ownership in the State, of land that exceeds the permissible limit and is not under the personal cultivation of the landlord. The small landowners whose right, title and interest have been extinguished

because of this provision, and who do not have any other means of livelihood are to be given rehabilitation grant by the Government according to the rules framed under the *Act*. It gives right of resumption of land for personal cultivation to personnel serving in the armed forces, unmarried women, widows, minors and persons suffering from mental and physical infirmities and they have been also given the option of leasing out land. With a view to checking malafide transfers of land made after the 1st April, 1952, with an intention of circumventing the provisions of the *Act*, it has been provided that such transfers by way of partitions, contracts or agreements shall be void. The *Act* gives power to the State Government for the assumption of management or acquisition of land, belonging to certain classes of landowners under certain conditions, to bring the agricultural economy to a high level of efficiency or for some public purpose.

After the enforcement of this *Act* with effect from 26th January 1955, as many as 488 tenants out of a total number of 17,701 have acquired ownership rights in the land measuring 4.82 *bighas*. In most of the cases land-lords have privately given ownership to their tenants. The land-revenue of the area of which ownership rights have been conferred upon the tenants amounts to Rs. 1,375.45. In lieu of acquisition of proprietorship the tenants have paid Rs. 59,066 by way of compensation. With the acquisition of land of big land-lords, under section 27 of *Act* 15 of 1954, the economic life of the tenants is likely to improve. There has been no change in the system of collection of land-revenue due to the enforcement of new agrarian measures. There are twenty-one land-lords owning land, the annual land-revenue of which exceeds Rs. 125. The area of such holdings exceeding the permissible limit, works out to 3,035 *bighas* with land-revenue amounting to Rs. 3,688.63 paise.

**Consolidation of holdings :** These operations were undertaken, for the first time, in Ghamarwin tahsil. *The Consolidation of Holdings Act* received the assent of the President of India on 19th April, 1954. Section I of the *Act* came into force in this district on 5th May, 1956. The consolidation scheme came into force on the 19th June, 1956. The work of consolidation of holdings is near completion in this district.

**Bhoodan :** *The Bhoodan Yajna Act* came into force in this district in the year 1954 as a result of a movement initiated by Acharya Vinoba Bhave for acquisition of land through voluntary gifts in favour of a legally constituted board. There is a body corporate having perpetuate succession and common seal with power to acquire, hold, administer and transfer property both movable and immovable and to enter in contracts and can by the said name, sue and be sued. The board administers all land vested in it for

the benefit of the *Bhoodan Yajna*. A person, owning a transferrable interest in the land, can donate and grant such land to the *Bhoodan Yajna* by a declaration in writing in that behalf to be filed with the board as soon as it is made. The board, if it considers the donation or grant acceptable, sends the declaration to the Revenue Officer, having jurisdiction in the tahsil or village where land is situated. There are but dim future prospects for this movement in this district because most of the land has been or will be acquired by tenants under the *Himachal Pradesh Abolition of Big Landed Estates and Land Reforms Act*. A sizable part of the land has been submerged under the Gobind Sagar which created general land hunger.

### **Rural wages and the condition of agricultural labour**

The conditions of rural wages and rural wage-earners, as far back as 1910 were as follows.

"Fully three quarters of the population are dependent on agriculture. Kanets are the most successful. Rajputs and Brahmans are less painstaking. Rathis are industrious, but their results are inferior to those of the Kantets."

"The principal agricultural labourers are Julahas, Chamer, Kolis and Dumnas. These either work as '*kamas*' by the month, or as '*chhakus*' by the day. On the former capacity they receive one rupee or one rupee and four annas a month and their food and clothes; in the latter they are given two seers of grain and one meal a day. The village artisans, blacksmiths, barbers, basket makers, etc, get eight seers (pukka) of grain at each harvest from their employers."

"It is a favourite practice for Kanets and other agriculturists to take service as labourer for three or four months in the year, and these usually go to Simla for the summer, where they earn good wages". These conditions have been materially changed but many points still linger on. People still continue to swarm Simla in search of livelihood and offer themselves as rickshaw pullers, domestic servants and *mizdoors*. Educated class capture jobs in the shops and offices. Many of uneducated persons serve as milk suppliers from the suburbs of Simla.

The agricultural labourers fall into two categories, namely, skilled and unskilled workers. Skilled labourers are carpenters, blacksmiths and cobblers etc, while the unskilled workers include field labour employed on various agricultural operations, such as herdsmen.

The census of 1961, enumerated 841 agricultural labourers in the district including 577 males and 264 females. In a population of 1,58,806, the numerical strength of agricultural labour is very small. The cause appears to be that, among the agriculturist class of people, almost all are either landowners or land-holders and, therefore, busy on their own agricultural farms, without little time and leisure to offer themselves as labourers. Most of the agricultural operations, in need of necessary more hands, are successfully and regularly carried out, on the basis of mutual help. Of late, many developmental activities, all over the district, have opened a vast labour market where the people can engage themselves on better terms and for longer terms than are offered by the agricultural operations. Hence the agricultural labour in the true sense of the term is so insignificant in numerical strength. The wages earned by the agricultural labour, both skilled and unskilled are mentioned in detail in Chapter IX of this volume.

### OTHER SOURCES OF REVENUE

In addition to the land-revenue there are certain other sources of income to the State, such as the Excise, the Passengers and Goods Tax, Central Sales Tax, the Stamp Duty, the Registration Fee and the like. Each source merits brief description.

**Excise :** In 1910, the State had three distilleries at Bilaspur, Bagla and Naina Devi. These were leased annually and the lessees could distil as much as they pleased but were only allowed to sell to licensed vendors. But the Excise Department was created with the re-organisation of administration in the year 1939. It was set up for better control of the manufacture, sale and possession of excisable articles, especially liquor, opium, *charas* and manufactured tobacco. A beginning at distillation of liquor, locally, was made by opening a *bhathi* at Berighat near Bilaspur town in 1859. The first contract for manufacture and sales of country spirit was auctioned at rupees ten a year. By 1883 the annual amount of lease consideration had gone up to rupees twenty but between 1883 and 1933 the manufacture and sale of this commodity increased so much that at the beginning of the latter year the annual lease fetched Rs. 12,910. A second indigenous distillery had been licensed at Naina Devi. No rule had been promulgated to control and regulate manufacture, transport, or sale of the spirit. Possession was restricted to one quart bottle at a time. But bottling was not necessary and liquor was available in any quantity at all times at the premises where it was sold. It was for the lessee to license any number of shops attached to his distillery, to transport liquor in whatever manner he liked, to these places, stop illicit distillation and bring the offenders to book.

Cultivation and consumption of opium was also uncontrolled and unrestricted. The zamindars, naturally anxious to make money, tried to sow the poppy seed in as much area as they pleased and raised opium therefrom, part of which they sold to the State and the rest disposed off at will. The licensed vendors for the year, after they had paid the consideration money, were free to make the purchases themselves and sold the opium raw or manufactured at their premises. The only restriction on them was that they could not sell in more than a limited quantity at one time to any one, but this restriction they generally over-looked. Similar was the case with the sale of *charas*.

For the supply of cigarettes in the State a company was given a general lease. This monopoly system led to various evils. The profit making instinct made the contractors to rush in all sorts of undesirable material. Inconvenience to smokers was appreciable.

Between 1933 and 1938 position remained almost unaltered. The State during these years surveyed the whole situation about alcohol, the land under poppy cultivation, the method of collection, manufacture and sale of opium employed by the contractors, extent and area of greatest consumption of the intoxicants, and the class of people mostly affected. The following table gives the figures of income and indicates a steady upward curve reaching the figure 16,762 in 1938.

| Year     | Alcohol | Opium | Charas | Cigarettes | Total  |
|----------|---------|-------|--------|------------|--------|
| (Rupees) |         |       |        |            |        |
| 1933     | 7,010   | 2,925 | 2,925  | 1,020      | 13,880 |
| 1934     | 6,950   | 3,496 | 3,496  | 910        | 14,825 |
| 1935     | 7,195   | 2,250 | 2,250  | 1,005      | 12,700 |
| 1936     | 7,861   | 3,024 | 3,007  | 1,630      | 15,522 |
| 1937     | 9,070   | 2,887 | 2,871  | 1,638      | 16,452 |
| 1938     | 9,625   | 2,731 | 2,731  | 1,675      | 16,762 |

This preliminary survey revealed that the habit of taking alcohol was of recent growth and, therefore, more easily controllable, should the State decide to introduce total or partial prohibition. To begin with, as the first

measure of control, a distillery managed and worked by the Department was constructed at Berighat. Liquor distilled was bottled and sealed and kept in the warehouse from where it was issued to the licensed vendors alone. This went on for some months but did not prove efficacious. There was danger of the liquor being smuggled out and because it was difficult at once to arrange mechanical bottling, there was found little distinction between the liquor distilled at Berighat and liquor that could be illicitly manufactured. In the meanwhile, the Amritsar Distillery Company was corresponding with the erstwhile State and had proposed to supply its entire spirit requirements. An arrangement was entered into and the company supplied less than a thousand and a half gallons of spirit per year during four years (1938—42). In addition during the year 1939, 814.25 gallons of plain spirit and 217.15 gallons of spiced spirit consumed were of local manufacture. Thus the total consumption of spirit in the erstwhile State during 1933, was 1,537.58 gallons, in 1940, it rose to 2,300.12 gallons, in 1941, it stood at 2,168.32 and in 1942, it fell to 1,463.05 gallons. These figures make clear two things : one that the maximum consumption of spirit in the erstwhile State was in the year 1940, secondly, that the consumption exhibited a downward tendency in the year 1942.

With the control of manufacture and supply of spirit, its sale and possession were also regulated. The supply received from the distillery was stored at the headquarters in the State warehouse. A system of licensed premises was introduced. The licensees purchased their requirements from the warehouse and retailed the same at fixed rates to their customers. The rates fixed were at par with those prevailing in the British Punjab. *The Punjab Excise Act* and Rules with necessary modifications were also enforced.

By the time when in 1942 the Amritsar Distillery Company conveyed their inability to supply State requirements of spirit on account of increasing demands of the army, prohibition had become a declared policy of the erstwhile State. No attempt was, therefore, made to restart the local distillery. More intensified publicity and education was thenceforward made against the evils of the drinking habit. Towards the close of the year there were clear indications that there existed very little demand for spirituous liquors.

The gross yearly income under this head since the inception of the Department, was Rs. 10,188-1-0 in a year rising to Rs. 15,357-7-0 in 1942 although in 1940 and 1941 it reached a much higher figure. Deducting from this a sum of Rs. 9,823 on account of expenditure for the working of the Department, prohibition in the State amounted to a surrender of revenue of about fifteen thousand rupees per year.

The control of opium had been quite as firm, though for various reasons a little less imperceptible, as liquor. The land under poppy cultivation was first surveyed to ascertain the average yield per acre, average yearly consumption in the State was then calculated, and a scheme to restrict and license cultivation introduced. In 1939 this area was one hundred and ninety acres; in 1940 it rose to one hundred and ninety-nine acres. But in 1941 the policy of delimitation or production to approximate to local needs only was rigidly enforced. The area was fixed, villages were earmarked and parganas specified for raising this drug. The cultivation was licensed, and its purchase and sale vested exclusively in the Department itself. Under the new system authorised agents of the Department went round and purchased opium on the spot. The drug was manufactured out of this raw product at Bilaspur, stored in the State warehouse to be sold, according to need, to licensed vendors. In 1941 the area under cultivation was brought down to one hundred and forty-nine acres and in 1942 to one hundred and thirty-six acres, but the number of shops was increased from sixteen to twenty-four to discourage large purchases and thereby to forestall illicit disposal. The following table shows the production and consumption of and revenue from the opium for the years 1939-42.

| Description                            | 1939    | 1940   | 1941    | 1942    |
|--|---------|--------|---------|---------|
| 1. Area under cultivation in acres.    | 190     | 199    | 149     | 136     |
| 2. Yield forecast in maunds.           | 4-15-0  | 3-30-0 | 3-7-11  | 3-30-0  |
| 3. Raw product (actual) in maunds etc. | 10-15-0 | 8-16-0 | 6-34-0  | 5-30-0  |
| 4. Manufactured yield in maunds etc.   | 5-17-0  | 4-7-13 | 1-16-14 | 3-24-14 |
| 5. Consumption in maunds etc.          | 3-13-0  | 3-20-0 | 4-20-0  | 3-23-11 |



|   |            |            |           |            |
|---|------------|------------|-----------|------------|
| 6. Consumption per thousand of population in seers. | 1.33       | 1.4        | 1.8       | 1.43       |
| 7. Gross income in rupees.                          | 12,450-0-0 | 10,969-0-0 | 8,210-0-0 | 6,293-0-0  |
| 8. Price paid in rupees.                            | 7,760-2-9  | 6,069-3-9  | 2,895-1-9 | 2,793-14-0 |
| 9. Net income in rupees.                            | 4,700-0-0  | 4,000-0-0  | 5,318-0-0 | 3,500-0-0  |

*The Opium Act* had been enforced and the possession of the drug was limited to two tolas (360 grains) at a time. There had been twelve convictions under this *Act*, out of a total of sixteen cases of apprehension during the decade 1932-42.

*Bhang* or *charas* were not used in any form ; therefore no provision existed for their control. *Charas* was procured from the Government bounded warehouse at Hoshiarpur on payment of full price, duty on the State at the end of the year of purchase. Towards the close of the year 1942, imports of this drug into India from the Chinese Turkistan having stopped, the Punjab Government allowed it to the State as to others on a quota basis, calculated on the purchases of a number of years in the past. With the result that towards the close of the year 1942 only a nominal quantity of *charas* was left over in the State warehouse. The following table shows the yearly quantities of *charas* purchased and consumed during the four years ending with 1942.

| Description  | 1939  | 1940  | 1941  | 1942  |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. Quantity purchased in tolas.                    | 4,338 | 7,485 | 3,699 | 4,807 |
| 2. Quantity consumed in tolas.                     | 2,783 | 5,638 | 6,268 | 4,969 |
| 3. Quantity left over for the year next following. | 1,555 | 3,411 | 842   | 580   |

This commodity, too was stored in the erstwhile State warehouse at the headquarters and the licensed vendors were allowed to make purchase from there at fixed rates.

*The Tobacco Vend Fees Act* had been enforced in the State. Under its provisions the sale of manufactured tobacco had been controlled. Only a person obtaining a licence could sell it. The producer had been excepted.

Before 1939 the Revenue Department managed the excise revenue as well. With the formation of a separate Department, excise affairs were placed under the Under Secretary General. In the year 1941 the new policy had been oriented and the Department came under the charge of the Home Secretary. The following table shows the net income and expenditure of the department for the year 1939 to 1942.

| Description                          | 1939       | 1940        | 1941       | 1942        |
|--------------------------------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|
| 1. Net income.                       | 11,390-2-0 | 31,336-9-10 | 37,326-6-9 | 31,576-3-0  |
| 2. Expenditure on establishment etc. | 578-12-0   | 1,674-2-9   | 1,151-14-6 | 712-3-6     |
| 3. Surplus.                          | 10,811-7-0 | 29,662-7-1  | 36,174-8-3 | 30,863-15-6 |

In spite of all efforts no adequate record is available to throw light on the administration of excise policies in the erstwhile State. It is believed that prohibition was enforced during the reign of Raja Anand Chand, under the *Bombay Prohibition Act* and rules applied to the State. This continued till the Bilaspur State was integrated with the Indian Union, declared as class 'C' State and emerged as Chief Commissioner's Province. This period covered about six years from 1948 to 1st July, 1954. During this regime while the *Bilaspur Prohibition Act* and rules on the pattern of *Bombay Acts* and Rules existed, the *Punjab Excise Act, 1914* and the rules were also made applicable. The Superintendent of Police was declared as the Prohibition Commissioner. He was assisted by an Excise Inspector in the day-to-day excise work. Later the Deputy Commissioner, Bilaspur, as Collector, became the head of the excise work. After 1st July, 1954, the Bilaspur State merged into Himachal Pradesh. The *Bilaspur Prohibition Act* and Rules were repealed and only the *Punjab Excise Act* remained in force. The prohibition continued to be governed by the *Punjab Prohibition Rules*.

The administrative set up of the Excise and Taxation Department at the district level comprises an Excise and Taxation Officer with his usual staff. He is the assessing authority under the various *Acts* relating to Excise and Taxation Department. He is assisted by a number of Excise and Taxation Inspectors.

At the State level the Department is looked after by two Deputy Excise and Taxation Commissioners, the Excise and Taxation Commissioner and the Secretary. The Department is under the overall control of the Minister.

The district till 1970-71 was a dry area and the liquor was sold on medicinal grounds to the public through the retail vend shops and on permits issued by the Collector. Opium to its addicts for health reasons used to be issued by the Collector who is the head of the excise administration in the district. Therefore, the consumption of liquor and opium in the district was negligible. The incidence of illicit distillation for these reasons were considerable, which are mentioned in Chapter XII. After 1970-71, the Government has declared this district as wet area and now the liquor and country wine is sold through the vend and country liquor shops. The following statistics for the preceding two years will show the consumption of these beverages and opium.

Consumption of country spirit, opium and foreign liquor.

| Items.                                   | 1970-71 | 1971-72 |
|--|---------|---------|
| 1. Country Spirit ('000 P Litres)        | 14.62   | 40.39   |
| 2. Opium (Kilograms)                     | —       | —       |
| 3. Liquors :—                            |         |         |
| (a) Indian Spirit ('000 P Litres)        | —       | —       |
| (b) Indian made spirit ('000 P litres)   | 5.37    | 8.51    |
| Total ('000 P. Litres)                   | 5.37    | 8.51    |
| 4. Beer :— (a) Imported ('000 B. Litres) | —       | —       |
| (b) Indian made ('000 B. Litres)         | 10.84   | 19.22   |
| Total ('000 B Litres)                    | 10.84   | 19.22   |

Various State and Central taxes are in the force in the district. These taxes have added considerably to the State exchequer. The following table

will denote the annual income (in thousands of rupees) derived from the excise and the implementation of various *Acts* in the district.

| Particulars                           | 1965-66 | 1966-67 | 1967-68 | 1968-69 | 1969-70 | 1970-71 |
|---------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1. Liquor (excluding state Head duty) | 16.03   | 17.61   | 16.86   | 23.40   | 49.06   | 473.00  |
| 2. State Head duty                    | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| 3. Opium                              | 1.07    | 1.73    | 2.87    | 1.62    | 1.50    | 1.32    |
| 4. Bhang                              | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| 5. Sale of Power Alcohol              | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| 6. General sales tax                  | 2.87    | 9.54    | 44.33   | 6.71    | 169.18  | 417.91  |
| 7. Immovable property                 | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| 8. Entertainment duty                 | 15.34   | 17.79   | 11.33   | 1.40    | 9.34    | 41.80   |
| 9. Show Tax                           | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       | 0.09    |
| 10. Motor spirit sales tax            | 50.46   | 77.76   | 96.10   | 51.16   | 25.27   | 30.65   |
| 11. Forward General tax               | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| 12. General sales tax                 | 1.63    | 2.86    | 0.87    | 1.40    | 137.58  | 177.34  |
| 13. Passengers and goods tax          | 153.24  | 220.57  | 314.80  | 342.96  | 384.17  | 629.73  |
|                                       | 240.64  | 347.86  | 487.16  | 428.65  | 776.60  | 1771.84 |

**Stamps :—**During the State regime stamps, both judicial and non-judicial, were manufactured locally. The procedure as to their custody and disposal was exactly the same as in British India. A statement showing the annual income derived from the sale of judicial and non-judicial stamps (separately) from 1949-50 to 1972-73 is given below :—

| Year    | Judicial<br>(court fee) | Non-judicial | Total       |
|---------|-------------------------|--------------|-------------|
|         | Rs.                     | Rs.          | Rs.         |
| 1949-50 | 71,519                  | 5,579        | 37,098      |
| 1950-51 | 26,843                  | 6,439        | 33,282      |
| 1951-52 | 29,958                  | 12,762       | 42,720      |
| 1952-53 | 28,265                  | 14,693       | 42,958      |
| 1953-54 | 28,251                  | 16,004       | 44,225      |
| 1954-55 | 28,804                  | 18,213       | 44,017      |
| 1955-56 | 27,186                  | 18,124       | 45,310      |
| 1956-57 | 32,279                  | 23,523       | 57,802      |
| 1957-58 | 35,909                  | 26,695       | 62,604      |
| 1958-59 | 52,520                  | 32,636       | 85,156      |
| 1959-60 | 64,125                  | 37,602       | 1,01,727    |
| 1960-61 | 70,962.50               | 44,933       | 1,15,895.50 |
| 1961-62 | 1,71,830.18             | 91,794       | 2,63,624.18 |
| 1962-63 | 2,16,023.77             | 1,25,413     | 3,41,436.00 |
| 1963-64 | 2,70,882.37             | 1,61,277     | 4,32,159.37 |
| 1964-65 | 3,16,941.87             | 1,99,826     | 5,16,767.87 |
| 1965-66 | 3,72,815.87             | 2,49,966.50  | 6,22,782.37 |
| 1966-67 | 64,144.75               | 46,088.00    | 110,232.75  |
| 1967-68 | 52,221.25               | 37,510.00    | 89,731.25   |
| 1968-69 | 55,521.00               | 34,269.00    | 89,790.00   |
| 1969-70 | 62,985.00               | 32,805.00    | 95,790.00   |
| 1970-71 | 65,258.00               | 52,770.00    | 118,028.00  |
| 1971-72 | 440,297.00              | 130,291.00   | 570,588.00  |
| 1972-73 | 125,130.00              | 160,165.00   | 285,295.00  |

It will be evident from the statement that the income on account of sale of judicial and non-judicial stamps has shown increase every year and this is to some extent, due to increase in the number of lease deeds and mortgage of lands. The stamps are sold through the licensed stamp vendors, one at Bilaspur proper and the other at Ghamarwin. There is only one ex-officio stamp vendor working at the district headquarters.

**Registration :** Previously there was a registration office at Bilaspur and deeds of mortgage and sale were freely registered by zamindars. The Tahsildar was the Sub-Registrar. With the reform in the judiciary and of the legal system, during the ruler's regime, the registration of deeds had assumed an added importance. Besides, in accordance with the provisions laid down in the first settlement report no owner could transfer his land permanently without the previous sanction of the raja. With effect from 1939 subsequent to a communique issued from the *Ijlas-i-Alia*, these restrictions were removed in so far as they affected the public at large. They were retained only in case of persons having no reversioners within the fifth degree, whose property would escheat to the State. This was calculated to serve as an unfailing incentive to adjustment of landed property. During the years 1933 to 1938, the yearly average number of registered deeds was seventy-one but it rose to two hundred and sixty-seven for the years 1939 to 1942. Realising the significance of the situation, the raja charged the highest revenue officials with the work of registration. The Revenue Secretary was appointed as the Registrar and the Collector as the Sub-Registrar. During the decennium 1932-42, 1,495 deeds were registered against a sum of Rs. 5,92,262, requiring stamps to the value of Rs. 9,986 and resulting in the income of Rs. 7,760. Out of the registered documents 180 were mortgage deeds, 743 sale deeds, 312 deeds conferring rights of occupancy, 151 gift deeds, sixteen adoption deeds, thirty-three wills, forty-two deeds recorded general powers of attorney and six conferred special powers of attorney.

*The Indian Registration Act* was in force in the State. Copies of deeds registered were also supplied by the Registrar's office. A uniform charge of Rs. 1-8-0 per copy was made in the form of court fee stamps.

After the merger of Bilaspur into Himachal Pradesh on first July, 1954, the *Indian Registration Act* and Rules framed thereunder were extended afresh to the district.

The subjoined table shows the yearly income that accrued to the Government, under various sub-heads of registration during the years 1948 to 1954, when Bilaspur was a part 'C' State.

| Year | Compulsory and optional registration of immovable property | Compulsory and optional registration of movable property | Miscellaneous | Total     |
|------|--|--|---------------|-----------|
|      | Rs.  | Rs.  | Rs.           | Rs.       |
| 1948 | 1,099  | 13   | 57            | 1,169     |
| 1949 | 1,239  | 69   | 136           | 1,444     |
| 1950 | 1,187  | 70   | 370           | 1,627     |
| 1951 | 2,241  |  | 819           | 3,060     |
| 1952 | 4,305  |  | 1,358         | 5,663     |
| 1953 | 5,659  |  | 1,625         | 7,284     |
| 1954 | 7,309-8-0  | 11 66 11   | 632           | 8,007-8-0 |

After the amalgamation of the Bilaspur State into Himachal Pradesh its revenue under this head registered increase which can be seen from the following table depicting the statistics for the last four years.

|         |         |       |         |
|---------|---------|-------|---------|
| 1968-69 | 36.09   | 35.00 | 71.09   |
| 1969-70 | 29.98   | 28.00 | 57.98   |
| 1970-71 | 838.92  | 23.00 | 861.92  |
| 1971-72 | 1074.61 | 32.00 | 1107.61 |

At the district level the *Registration Act* is implemented through the Deputy Commissioner acting as ex-officio Registrar and below him there are two Sub-Registrars (Tahsildars) one each in tahsil Sadar and Ghamarwin. Above the district level the Director of Land Records has been declared as ex-officio Inspector General of Registration for looking after the implementation of the *Registration Act*.

## Chapter XII

### LAW AND ORDER AND JUSTICE

#### INCIDENCE OF CRIME

In the past the crime was rare and confined mainly to minor injuries, petty thefts, trespass and moral offences. By the time of the integration of the erstwhile Bilaspur State outside criminals were, it is said, very active in this area, responsible for a number of dacoities and other heinous offences. Subsequent to the merger of Bilaspur with Himachal Pradesh the district police was organised which started to unearth and liquidate the criminals.

The crime statistics are not available for the period prior to the year 1949 and, therefore, it is not possible to form, even generally, any opinion about the situation of crime during the pre-merger period. The following table denotes the criminal statistics since 1950 onwards.

| Years | Reported | Convicted | Acquitted | Percentage of conviction to reported | Percentage of convicted to tried cases |
|-------|----------|-----------|-----------|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1950  | 245      | 102       | 73        | 48.78                                | 58.21                                  |
| 1951  | 216      | 81        | 33        | 37.50                                | 69.82                                  |
| 1952  | 211      | 88        | 36        | 41.70                                | 77.96                                  |
| 1953  | 180      | 82        | 24        | 45.55                                | 75.45                                  |
| 1954  | 180      | 101       | 26        | 53.15                                | 79.52                                  |
| 1955  | 178      | 70        | 49        | 45.88                                | 58.82                                  |
| 1956  | 196      | 80        | 58        | 46.81                                | 69.69                                  |
| 1957  | 191      | 49        | 72        | 25.65                                | 40.83                                  |
| 1958  | 221      | 99        | 51        | 44.79                                | 66.00                                  |
| 1959  | 282      | 125       | 66        | 44.32                                | 65.55                                  |



|      |     |     |    |       |       |
|------|-----|-----|----|-------|-------|
| 1960 | 326 | 201 | 74 | 61.60 | 73.09 |
| 1961 | 332 | 146 | 78 | 41.73 | 64.03 |
| 1962 | 393 | 164 | 78 | 41.73 | 67.76 |
| 1963 | 337 | 111 | 58 | 32.93 | 54.15 |
| 1964 | 383 | 182 | 49 | 47.52 | 69.76 |
| 1965 | 362 | 147 | 58 | 40.60 | 58.10 |
| 1966 | 465 | 201 | 76 | 43.23 | 66.77 |
| 1967 | 292 | 197 | 75 | 67.47 | 68.10 |
| 1968 | 349 | 190 | 45 | 54.44 | 72.52 |
| 1969 | 275 | 134 | 86 | 48.73 | 54.92 |
| 1970 | 272 | 53  | 68 | 19.52 | 36.80 |
| 1971 | 296 | 67  | 40 | 22.63 | 53.47 |
| 1972 | 364 | 81  | 57 | 23.73 | 53.64 |

The crime figures would have us believe that the incidence of crime during the period under review has, after showing a trend towards decrease, reverted in 1959 to the pitch of 1949. Thence onwards the figures remained fluctuating on the higher side till 1966 when the graph achieved the highest point. Speaking generally the decrease in the number of cases was not only short-lived but also insignificant, during a few intervening years. The increase in crime till 1966 is attributable, firstly to the policy of free registration of crime and, secondly to the general tendency on the part of Bhakra Dam oustees to encroach upon the Government land.

The sub-joined table illustrates the variety of important crimes in the district during the last about 23 years :—

| Sl. No.                  | Sub-Head   | 1950 | 1951 | 1952 | 1953 | 1954 |
|--------------------------|------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1                        | 2          | 3    | 4    | 5    | 6    | 7    |
| <b>1. Murder</b>         |            |      |      |      |      |      |
|                          | Reported.  | —    | 3    | 2    | 1    | 2    |
|                          | Convicted. | —    | 3    | 1    |      | 2    |
|                          | Acquitted. | —    | —    | 1    | 1    | —    |
| <b>2. Dacoity</b>        |            |      |      |      |      |      |
|                          | Reported.  | 4    | 3    | —    | —    | —    |
|                          | Convicted. | —    | —    | —    | —    | —    |
|                          | Acquitted. | 3    | 1    | —    | —    | —    |
| <b>3. Robbery</b>        |            |      |      |      |      |      |
|                          | Reported.  | 9    | 5    | 2    | —    | 2    |
|                          | Convicted. | —    | —    | 1    | —    | 1    |
|                          | Acquitted. | 2    | 4    | 1    | —    | 1    |
| <b>4. Rioting</b>        |            |      |      |      |      |      |
|                          | Reported.  | 3    | 2    | 5    | —    | 3    |
|                          | Convicted. | 2    | 1    | 2    | —    | —    |
|                          | Acquitted. | 1    | 1    | —    | —    | —    |
| <b>5. Thefts</b>         |            |      |      |      |      |      |
|                          | Reported.  | 59   | 34   | 21   | 35   | 38   |
|                          | Convicted. | 25   | 17   | 15   | 19   | 20   |
|                          | Acquitted. | 17   | 6    | 4    | 1    | 5    |
| <b>6. House breaking</b> |            |      |      |      |      |      |
|                          | Reported.  | 22   | 41   | 9    | 29   | 31   |
|                          | Convicted. | 12   | 9    | 4    | 8    | 15   |
|                          | Acquitted. | 8    | 6    | 3    | 1    | —    |

| 1955 | 1956 | 1957 | 1958 | 1959 | 1960 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 8    | 9    | 10   | 11   | 12   | 13   |
| 2    | 1    | 4    | 1    | 6    | 1    |
| 2    | 1    | 3    | 1    | 4    | 3    |
|      | —    | —    | —    | —    | —    |
| —    | —    | —    | —    | —    | 2    |
| —    | —    | —    | —    | —    | —    |
| —    | —    | —    | —    | —    | —    |
| 2    | 4    | 5    | —    | 6    | 5    |
| —    | 2    | 1    | —    | 3    | 1    |
| 1    | 2    | 2    | —    | 1    | 2    |
| 1    | 3    | 2    | 2    | 7    | 3    |
| —    | —    | 2    | 1    | 5    | —    |
| 1    | 2    | —    | 1    | 1    | 2    |
| 46   | 33   | 31   | 39   | 47   | 45   |
| 13   | 20   | 9    | 11   | 13   | 19   |
| 12   | 9    | 11   | 8    | 18   | 9    |
| 19   | 22   | 12   | 41   | 28   | 28   |
| 3    | 12   | 5    | 19   | 9    | 11   |
| 1    | 4    | 6    | 5    | 3    | 5    |

|    | 1961 | 1962 | 1963 | 1964 | 1965 | 1966 |
|----|------|------|------|------|------|------|
|    | 14   | 15   | 16   | 17   | 18   | 19   |
| 1. |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|    | 3    | —    | 1    | 1    | 1    | 3    |
|    | —    | 1    | —    | —    | —    | —    |
|    | —    | 2    | —    | 1    | 1    | —    |
| 2. |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|    | —    | —    | —    | 1    | —    | —    |
|    | —    | —    | —    | —    | —    | —    |
|    | —    | —    | —    | —    | —    | —    |
| 3. |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|    | 1    | 4    | 10   | 5    | 7    | 5    |
|    | 3    | —    | —    | 3    | —    | 1    |
|    | —    | —    | 1    | 1    | 1    | 2    |
| 4. |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|    | 6    | 4    | 18   | 8    | 13   | 4    |
|    | 1    | 2    | 4    | 2    | —    | 2    |
|    | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1    | 4    | 2    |
| 5. |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|    | 34   | 53   | 24   | 44   | 33   | 41   |
|    | 14   | 8    | 10   | 11   | 7    | 11   |
|    | 10   | 5    | 6    | 4    | 5    | 3    |
| 6. |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|    | 23   | 23   | 58   | 41   | 30   | 36   |
|    | 6    | 5    | 4    | 4    | 7    | 8    |
|    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 1    | 4    | 2    |

| 1967 | 1968 | 1969 | 1970 | 1971 | 1972 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 20   | 21   | 22   | 23   | 24   | 25   |
| 4    | 4    | 2    | 1    | 2    | 2    |
| —    | 3    | 1    | 1    | —    | —    |
| —    | 1    | —    | —    | 1    | 2    |
| —    | —    | —    | —    | —    | —    |
| —    | —    | —    | —    | —    | —    |
| —    | —    | —    | —    | —    | —    |
| 9    | 5    | 5    | 3    | 8    | 9    |
| 1    | 1    | 3    | —    | 1    | 1    |
| 2    | 1    | 2    | 2    | —    | 2    |
| 2    | —    | 2    | 5    | 15   | 26   |
| —    | —    | —    | —    | —    | —    |
| 2    | —    | 1    | 1    | —    | —    |
| 39   | 16   | 31   | 37   | 39   | 42   |
| 11   | 11   | 4    | 1    | 3    | 4    |
| 9    | 1    | 7    | 8    | 2    | 2    |
| 35   | 34   | 29   | 21   | 34   | 23   |
| 8    | 3    | 5    | 5    | 5    | 2    |
| 1    | 12   | 1    | 1    | 2    | 2    |

| Sl. No.  | Sub-Head   | 1950 | 1951 | 1952 | 1953 | 1954 |
|--|------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1  | 2          | 3    | 4    | 5    | 6    | 7    |
| <b>7. Kidnapping</b>                               |            |      |      |      |      |      |
|  | Reported.  | 5    | 3    | 12   | 2    | 6    |
|  | Convicted. | —    | —    | 7    | —    | 2    |
|  | Acquitted. | 4    | 3    | 2    | 1    | 2    |
| <b>8. House trespass</b>                           |            |      |      |      |      |      |
|  | Reported.  | 5    | —    | —    | 1    | 1    |
|  | Convicted. | 1    | —    | —    | —    | —    |
|  | Acquitted. | 2    | —    | —    | —    | —    |
| <b>9. Serious mischiefs &amp; cognate offences</b> |            |      |      |      |      |      |
|  | Reported.  | 4    | 8    | 2    | —    | 3    |
|  | Convicted. | 2    | 1    | —    | —    | 1    |
|  | Acquitted. | 1    | 1    | —    | —    | 1    |

| 1955 | 1956 | 1957 | 1958 | 1959 | 1960 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 8    | 9    | 10   | 11   | 12   | 13   |
| 2    | 3    | 4    | —    | 9    | 4    |
| 1    | 2    | —    | —    | 4    | —    |
| 1    | 1    | 4    | —    | 3    | 3    |
| 1    | 2    | 1    | 6    | 9    | 10   |
| —    | 1    | 1    | 2    | 3    | 6    |
| —    | 1    | 1    | 2    | 3    | 3    |
| 3    | 4    | 3    | 3    | 4    |      |
| —    | 2    | 1    | 2    | 2    | 1    |
| —    | —    | —    | 1    | 2    | 1    |

|    | 1961 | 1962 | 1963 | 1964 | 1965 | 1966 |
|----|------|------|------|------|------|------|
|    | 14   | 15   | 16   | 17   | 18   | 19   |
| 7. |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|    | 6    | 2    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 5    |
|    | —    | —    | —    | —    | —    | —    |
|    | 3    | 1    | 2    | 1    | 1    | —    |
| 8. |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|    | 8    | 4    | 95   | 49   | 48   | 68   |
|    | 3    | 1    | 27   | 16   | 9    | 24   |
|    | 2    | 2    | 15   | 6    | 14   | 7    |
| 9. |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|    | 3    | 5    | 11   | 12   | 8    | 6    |
|    | —    | —    | 1    | 3    | 1    | 2    |
|    | 1    | 1    | 2    | —    | 1    | 1    |



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| 1967 | 1968 | 1969 | 1970 | 1971 | 1972 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 20   | 21   | 22   | 23   | 24   | 25   |
| 6    | —    | 7    | 7    | 8    | 4    |
| —    | —    | —    | —    | 1    | —    |
| 1    | —    | 1    | 1    | 2    | 2    |
| 33   | 32   | 32   | 63   | 24   | 18   |
| 15   | 22   | 15   | 3    | —    | 3    |
| 13   | 6    | 10   | 3    | 1    | 6    |
| 2    | 9    | 4    | 10   | 6    | 5    |
| 1    | —    | 3    | —    | —    | —    |
| 1    | 2    | 1    | 5    | —    | 2    |

Except for the year 1959 the incidence of murder is generally normal, dacoities are rare, robberies are of frequent occurrence and are on the increase and rioting is similarly frequent but not so alarming. Incidence of thefts is by far the greatest. Although the number of reported cases, in any particular year has not crossed the figure of sixty, yet the crime would seem to be deep rooted and one may have the impression that it is rampant. Approximating to thefts are the cases of house breaking, a crime much akin to or resulting ultimately in thefts. Cases of kidnapping are also not unknown. The cases relating to house trespass are also taking upward trend. Lastly there are serious mischief and cognate offences, although less in number, yet almost of regular occurrence. There are no particular crimes peculiar to the district. The district is immune from cases in piracy, gang dacoity, smuggling and border raids.

Although economic condition of the people is showing signs of change for the better, yet it is too early so far to assess the effect and impact of this factor on the crime situation.

Scientific methods of investigation as far as possible, are being used for the detection of crime. Bilaspur is attached to the Finger Print Bureau, Phillaur, since the beginning of 1963. In some burglary cases, finger impressions, suspected to have been left by the accused, were lifted and sent to Finger Print Bureau, Phillaur, for comparison and the results led to the arrest of the accused.

### ORGANISATION OF THE POLICE FORCE

An exceptional feature of the police administration in Bilaspur has been its traditional and representative nature. From time immemorial a warlike, but essentially law abiding and peaceful people evolved a system of watch and ward which combined with highest demands of vigilance with the least interference in their daily lives. Till about the beginning of the twentieth century the functions of the police in the erstwhile Bilaspur State continued to be discharged by a complex body, known as the *saaths*. They were enrolled in twelve different *thanas*, the strength varying in each *thana* from fifteen to twenty persons, called *piadas* or footmen with *negis* or leaders at their head. The Sadar *thana* was known as the *chaunta*, the persons enrolled in it as *chauntrus*, their head called as elsewhere in India, the *kotwal*. Their uniform consisted of a red turban, black trousers and a white shirt. Each of them carried a *tore-bund* (muzzle loading gun) and a sword hung to the waist, as part of the accoutrement. Some of them were mounted and maintained their own horses. Their duties comprised a variety of functions ranging from the prevention of crime, the investigation of cases, the arresting

of offenders, serving processes and guarding the convicts, collection of revenues, protection of forests, carrying the mail, and to act as the mobile auxiliary administration in the mofussil. In fact they formed the subordinate executive machinery of the then State in peace and its dare devil militia when any danger threatened it from outside. They worked generally in shifts. For months in the year some of them attended to their duties as State servants while others were at liberty to work in their fields. Unification and control of their movements was always a difficult task and remained undefined to the end. Their officers enjoyed a variety of local civil, criminal and executive powers. But despite all this, efficiency and fair play never seem to have been questioned.

This system continued to be in force as late as the end of the nineteenth century. It was about this time that a growing consciousness of modern requirements began to look down upon their strange medley of powers and functions and to insist on a more definite form of organisation for them.

In the year 1887 a police station became the unit of police administration. For purposes of easy control, the erstwhile State was divided into five circles and police stations were located at Swarghat, Kot Kahlur, Talai, Ajmerpur and Tiun. The first and the last of these were later shifted to Sadar and Ghamarwin respectively. It was from these centres that the police then operated being co-ordinated in its activities from the headquarters in Bilaspur proper.

It would hardly be worth while to trace the development of the force from year to year, since its inception, especially as there is no record to show that its essential structure underwent any material change. In 1903 the force consisted of a Superintendent of Police, a Court Inspector, five Sub Inspectors, seventeen Head Constables and ninety-two Constables making a total strength of one hundred and sixteen. By 1910, there were five Police Stations at Bilaspur, Ajmerpur, Tiun, Talai and Kot Kahlur, with a Police Post at Swarghat. The Superintendent of Police apart, an Inspector was in general command of the whole force which numbered one hundred and six, and consisted of Brahmans, Rajputs and Kanets. There were five special town watchmen for Bilaspur, and village chowkidars had been appointed throughout the State. Formerly these only existed in Baseh and Bachhretu. The chowkidar was remunerated in kind, and got five seers of grain every half year from each house. By about the year 1932-33 the Department was still in this very form with the difference that the Superintendent of Police had, for sometime past, acted under the general control of the District Magistrate. On the retirement of the then Superintendent of Police in 1939, it was considered desirable to free the police from the control of the

magistracy and to place its head in a more independent position directly in touch with raja. The Department was accordingly placed under the direct supervision and guidance of the ruler and in 1939 a duly qualified lawyer was placed at its head called the Home Secretary and allotted functions with the police as one of his responsibilities. This arrangement not only achieved greater cohesion and efficiency in the force but also co-ordinated the working of the police with other allied departments. The constabulary and its officers, more or less, educated and trained young men, rapidly built up a tradition of force in their efficiency and integrity.

Side by side with the regular police force an auxiliary wing was organised. It was a highly mobile force as suited to the geographical requirements of the area. Its functions were mainly directed towards prevention of crime and breach of law in remoter parts of the territory, or in parts adjoining the Punjab and other neighbouring States; experience having shown that the incidence of crime in these parts tended to be higher because of the ease with which the offender could break the law and escape into the alien neighbourhood.

The Department of Police, both civil and military, was centrally controlled by the Home Secretary who was in direct touch with the ruler and, was the Head of the Department. He was a qualified lawyer and well versed with the local conditions, capable of directing investigation of crime. Although the actual investigation of crime and prosecution in the court of law was entrusted to others in the force, the Home Secretary was however, personally responsible for the investigation of intricate of heinous crimes.

In the year 1942-43 the strength of the police, on the civil side, consisted of two Sub Inspectors, five Assistant Sub Inspectors, twenty Head Constables and thirty foot Constables. In addition there were six men to carry dak to police posts regularly, and another two acted as cattle pond keepers at tahsil centres. During the year 1942-43 four Assistant Sub Inspectors were added with a reduction of one on the strength of Sub Inspectors. There was a considerable increase in the number of Head Constables, with only a total of seven in the three classes in 1933 it rose to twenty in 1942 in the upper two classes. This addition in the supervisory cadre had a salutary effect and increased the efficiency of the force. The total strength of the force was more or less stationery throughout the period ending 1942-43.

Special steps were taken to ensure discipline and efficiency of the entire police force and with that end in view in 1943 Assistant Sub Inspectors and Head Constables were deputed to Phillaur school for training. A teacher was also appointed for the education of the police

constabulary. Under this re-organisational scheme, recruitment to the police both in the cadre of officers and men was confined to State residents only who were, it was thought, aware of the customs and idiosyncracies of the people they had to deal with.

The military side of the force was organised in 1939. It started with a personnel of one Inspector (called Jamadar commanding a platoon in the army), two Sub Inspectors, forty-two other ranks and three followers. In 1941 the strength of the force consisted of one Inspector, three Assistant Sub Inspectors, four Head Constables and forty other ranks with the usual number of followers. A teacher was appointed and put on the strength in order to encourage literacy among other ranks.

The force was sufficiently enlarged in 1942. It consisted of one Inspector, four Assistant Sub Inspectors, six Head Constables and sixty-six other ranks with a special teacher and adequate number of followers.

The force was fully armed with forty muskets. In 1942 the Government of India granted some rifles to equip better part of the force. There was a mobile unit to aid the civil police force especially and the administration generally. It was also controlled from the centre through the Home Secretary, who was the Head of the Department. All men in the force had to undergo a rigid military training including daily parades along with P. T. courses under duly qualified instructor. Promotion to non-commissioned ranks was dependent upon efficiency in physical fitness, literacy and adequate knowledge of the duties.

The military police force had a distinctive uniform of their own. They were housed in barracks with special mess arrangement. They had to guard the State jail, as a regular part of their duty and were seconded to civil police stations, as and when necessity arose. In 1942, nine Constables under a Head Constable were put on such duty at Kot Kahlur.

At the great surge in the violent crime during the year 1940 three new police posts were established at Namol, Rumbagh and Hari Tiliangar. The platoons of Civil Guards were raised in the Kot Kahlur and Bahadurpur parganas in the years 1941 and 1942 respectively, to assist the police in preventing crime and bringing offenders to book. They were given training at the headquarters for a couple of months and were actively engaged in keeping the peace and at the same time furthering war efforts.

Thus subsequent to the accession of Raja Anand Chand in 1933 the Department of Police was modernised and its training and discipline placed in the hands of local officers trained in the police schools

in the Punjab. Modern arms were provided for the force, which had a strength of nearly two hundred men in 1947-48. In spite of whatever efforts were made by the princely regime to reorganise and improve the then State police force, it is said that the State police, before merger in 1954 was quite ignorant of drill and discipline as they had not undergone even the preliminary course prescribed for the recruits, in other States of India. The Police Department was divided into two parts, the executive police and the military police and were under the Home Minister. The executive police was directly controlled by an untrained officer with the designation of Deputy Superintendent of Police.

The sanctioned strength of the executive police and the military police at the time of merger comprised of one Deputy Superintendent of Police, four Inspectors, seven Sub Inspectors, four Assistant Sub Inspectors, thirty Head Constables and one hundred and one foot Constables, making a total of one hundred and forty-seven, besides five menials. The military police included a Subedar, three Hawaldars, four Naiks, eight Lance Naiks, two Buglers, one Clerk and sixty Sepoys, making a total of eighty besides nine menials.

The strength of the district police on 31st March 1972 comprised a Superintendent of Police, a Deputy Superintendent of Police, two Inspectors, eleven Sub Inspectors including one temporary, seven Assistant Sub Inspectors, forty-two Head Constables including two temporary and one hundred and seventy-five Constables including three temporary. Besides this there were two reserves of Armed Police consisting of two Assistant Sub Inspectors, six Head Constables and forty-eight Constables. The prosecution staff has on its establishment a temporary Public Prosecutor with one Assistant Police Prosecutor, three Head Constables and two Constables.

There are at present five Police Stations and four Police Posts in the district, out of which a Police Station and a Police Post serve the urban area and four Police Stations and three Police Posts are located in the rural areas. The sub-joined table gives at a glance an idea of police force as maintained at each Police Post and Police Station on March 31, 1972.

|                                 | Inspectors | Sub Inspectors | Assistant<br>Sub Insp-<br>ectors | Head<br>Const-<br>ables | Cons-<br>tables |
|---------------------------------|------------|----------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Police Station<br>Sadar      | —          | 1              | 1                                | 2                       | 12              |
| 2. Police Station<br>Ghamarwin  | —          | 1              | —                                | —                       | 9               |
| 3. Police Station<br>Bharari    | —          | 1              | —                                | —                       | 9               |
| 4. Police Station<br>Talai      | —          | 1              | —                                | —                       | 10              |
| 5. Police Station<br>Kot Kahlur | —          | 1              | —                                | 2                       | 10              |
| 6. Police Post Golthai          | —          | —              | 1                                | 1                       | 6               |
| 7. Police Post<br>Swarghat      | —          | —              | —                                | 1                       | 4               |
| 8. Police Post Namol            | —          | —              | —                                | 1                       | 4               |
| 9. City Police Post             | —          | —              | —                                | 1                       | 6               |

After the formation of the district police force was being maintained on the modern lines as elsewhere in Himachal Pradesh. As to how the police force has been re-organised and developed will be clear from the following figures of annual expenditure which have shown a steady increase during the recent years.

| Years   | Amount   | Years   | Amount   |
|---------|----------|---------|----------|
| 1949-50 | 1,89,018 | 1952-53 | 2,00,952 |
| 1950-51 | 1,82,624 | 1953-54 | 2,14,991 |
| 1951-52 | 1,82,434 | 1954-55 | 2,72,786 |

|         |          |         |           |
|---------|----------|---------|-----------|
| 1955-56 | 2,33,729 | 1964-65 | 6,22,580  |
| 1956-57 | 2,88,994 | 1965-66 | 6,51,741  |
| 1957-58 | 2,43,580 | 1966-67 | 7,00,951  |
| 1958-59 | 1,62,426 | 1967-68 | 9,88,598  |
| 1959-60 | 2,81,549 | 1968-69 | 10,00,081 |
| 1960-61 | 3,92,041 | 1969-70 | 12,88,881 |
| 1961-62 | 3,66,995 | 1970-71 | 13,48,969 |
| 1962-63 | 4,32,207 | 1971-72 | 14,63,910 |
| 1963-64 | 6,15,238 |         |           |

### Home Guards

As a result of 1962 Sino-Indian conflict necessity was felt all over the country to build up this organisation for civil defence. In this district also the institution of Home Guards was established in December 1962 by establishing one urban company to train the local people of Bilaspur city daily for one-and-a-half hour. Since then the organisation has grown considerably and now there are six companies of Home Guards with one independent Women's Wing. The strength of each company is one hundred and ten Home Guards. These companies are stationed at Bilaspur (urban), Ghamarwin, Jhandutta, Bassi, Markand and Bharari.

During all these years Home Guards Organisation has helped the civil authorities in times of wars and other disturbances. 270 Home Guards were deputed to help the police to protect bridges, water tanks, important buildings, communication centres, post offices, petrol pumps, etc. during the strike of the non-gazetted officers of Himachal Pradesh Government. During the General Elections of 1972, 136 Home Guards were deployed on election duty. During the same year they gave the barrier duty while the *Inter-Zone Maize Control Order* was in force. Besides such emergency duties the Home Guards continuously keep the people alert and prepare them for any contingency arising out of war or natural calamity.

The organisation is headed by a Commandant who is assisted by a Company Commander and three Platoon Commanders besides other office staff.



### Fire Fighting Organisation

The organisation of Home Guards is responsible for fire fighting operations in the district. Home Guards have been given training in fire fighting and some Home Guards from the district have been manning the fire stations at Simla and Dharamsala. No major fire break out has taken place in the recent past as would appear from the sub-joined table yet the loss sustained is obviously high.

| Years | Number of fires | Value of property damaged<br>Rs. | Years | Number of fires | Value of property damaged<br>Rs. |
|-------|-----------------|----------------------------------|-------|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| 1952  | 3               | 1,112                            | 1963  | 9               | 60,455                           |
| 1953  | 3               | 10,229                           | 1964  | 4               | 31,109                           |
| 1954  | 3               | 10,120                           | 1965  | 8               | 35,500                           |
| 1955  | 3               | 1,205                            | 1966  | 3               | 3,300                            |
| 1956  | 3               | 2,760                            | 1967  | 2               | 90,400                           |
| 1957  | 3               | 3,22,200                         | 1968  | 9               | 9,500                            |
| 1958  | 3               | 5,300                            | 1969  | 2               | 7,518                            |
| 1959  | 2               | 45,200                           | 1970  | 9               | 5,540                            |
| 1960  | 9               | 98,273                           | 1971  | 2               | 1,400                            |
| 1961  | 6               | 23,025                           | 1972  | 7               | 57,050                           |
| 1962  | 7               | 57,179                           |       |                 |                                  |

### Traffic police

With the development of roads especially after the merger of Bilaspur State, there has been a steady increase in the vehicular traffic and more and more vehicles are being put on the roads gradually. The traffic police is called upon to regulate the same. The traffic police staff consists of one

Assistant Sub Inspector and three Constables. With the introduction and increase in the vehicular traffic possibilities of accidents cannot be ruled out. During the last few years accidents occurred within the district involving certain casualties and a number of injuries. The table given below illustrates the position of accidents in its various aspects.

| Years | Number of accidents | Killed | Injured |
|-------|---------------------|--------|---------|
| 1952  | 3                   | 2      | 1       |
| 1953  | 2                   | —      | 2       |
| 1954  | 5                   | 3      | 8       |
| 1955  | 3                   | 1      | 2       |
| 1956  | 2                   | 11     | 21      |
| 1957  | 7                   | —      | 21      |
| 1958  | 3                   | —      | 11      |
| 1959  | 11                  | 4      | 14      |
| 1960  | 5                   | 2      | 25      |
| 1961  | 11                  | 3      | 8       |
| 1962  | 3                   | —      | 5       |
| 1963  | 3                   | 2      | 3       |
| 1964  | 8                   | 6      | 2       |
| 1965  | 9                   | 5      | 5       |
| 1966  | 6                   | 1      | 13      |
| 1967  | 9                   | 3      | 16      |
| 1968  | 4                   | 3      | 6       |
| 1969  | 5                   | 4      | 12      |
| 1970  | 8                   | 2      | 9       |
| 1971  | 16                  | 21     | 105     |
| 1972  | 13                  | 6      | 17      |

### Village police

During the pre-merger days the village chowkidar, a functionary of the Revenue Department reported the births and deaths to the Police Department and also rendered assistance in the detection and investigation of crime. With the enforcement of the *Punjab Chowkidara Rules*, their duties remain the same and they still are supposed to be under the Revenue Agency but their pay is met through a sort of tax levied on every household. To what extent this will make them lax or efficient is yet to be seen.

### JAILS AND LOCK-UPS

Prior to and some time even after the British conquest of the erstwhile Bilaspur State, the history of jails and lock-ups is obscure. By about 1910 there was only one jail located at Bilaspur proper. It had an accommodation for fifty male and eight female prisoners. To employ the jail mates profitably a start was made in about 1942-43 to manufacture durries, *nawar* and cotton bags. In 1942-43 the central jail, Bilaspur Sadar was housed in an old building on the roadside just below the town. The *Daroga* incharge of the jail stayed in a wing of the main building. He had under him twelve jail guards, one sweeper, one part-time iron smith and one handicraft teacher. With the arrival in the jail of notorious dacoits of the British Punjab, a section of the military police was deputed as standing guard daily round the building.

The average daily number of prisoners in 1933 was thirty-six which by 1942 rose to fifty-four. For these ten years the daily average of prisoners was thirty-seven. The convicts were kept daily busy, during regular working hours, at times with the Stores Department, at others with the P.W.D. and sometimes in the erstwhile State gardens. Sunday was allowed off to them for cleaning and washing. A trained handicraft teacher was employed to teach crafts to the prisoners. Weaving of durries became gradually popular though only a few of the jail occupants could be interested in this work, at the start, and the results were not encouraging. A few plots of land were attached to the jail for the vegetable requirements of its inmates. As the population was not very large the convicts were mostly employed on such odd jobs as attending to public gardens or doing multifarious Government duties such as carrying furniture and cleaning compounds etc. The Department was in the charge of the Revenue Secretary. Under him the State Chief Medical Officer acted as Superintendent. The *Punjab Jail Rules* with some minor modifications were in force.

The prisoners were supplied food, clothing and bedding at the State expense. The annual figures of the expenditure on the jail establishment

were Rs. 3,874 in 1933, Rs. 3,513 in 1934, Rs. 2,938 in 1935, Rs. 3,177 in 1936, Rs. 3,155 in 1937, Rs. 3,257 in 1938, Rs. 2,987 in 1939, Rs. 3,105 in 1940, Rs. 3,993 in 1941, and Rs. 6,400 in 1942-43. The figures from 1943 to 1949 are not available, however, the expenditure stood at Rs. 12,219 in 1949-50, Rs. 12,498 in 1950-51, Rs. 16,436 in 1951-52, Rs. 14,808 in 1952-53 and Rs. 12,980 in 1953-54.

But after the merger of Bilaspur State into Himachal Pradesh in 1954 the expenditure on the maintenance of jails has increased considerably as compared with the expenditure during the pre-merger days. This is perhaps explainable by the fact that maintenance of jails has been modernised and brought at par with the jail administration obtaining in the advanced and adjoining State of Punjab. The annual expenditure on jails which stood at Rs. 11,812 in 1954-55 rose to Rs. 1,00,536 in 1972-73.

**Location of jails and lock ups and prison organisation :** The concept of this jail in Bilaspur district took a new turn on 24th of October, 1960, when the sub-jail was replaced by an open air jail. Besides there are four police lock ups, in the police stations. The accommodation in the existing open air jail building is sufficient for 108 male prisoners and five female prisoners. To start with forty convicts selected from various jails all over Himachal Pradesh were brought to this novel jail and placed under the supervision of a whole time Superintendent specially trained in Uttar Pradesh to execute this new scheme. Four of the convicts were kept in the jail to work on essential prison services viz., kitchen, sanitation and the rest were sent out daily to work on the Public Works Department projects under the supervision of jail wardens and dependable convict officers. Since the formation of the district the annual daily average attendance of the prisoners in this jail has been about 15.

There is an elaborate jail staff comprising a Superintendent of Jail, assisted by an Assistant Superintendent of Jail, two Head Wardens, eighteen Wardens, a female Warden, two clerks, a driver and a sweeper.

**Prison discipline :** About four bighas of agricultural land is attached to the jail for gardening etc. The prisoners are made to carry out farming in the piece of land appertaining to the jail and they are also required to do certain work of carpentry including the repairs of furniture. Before the allotment of works the choice of the prisoners is ascertained and their aptitude towards a particular job is taken into consideration and shown due regard. Sale proceeds of the products turned out by the prisoners are credited into the Government treasury. Since 1960 the prisoners do not produce anything in the jail. They are instead allowed to work as labourers on daily wages on public and private sectors and the money so earned by

them is deposited in the bank in their accounts after deducting the maintenance charges at the rate of Re. 1 per head. At the end of his term the prisoner concerned is paid the residue amount of his wages.

**Welfare of prisoners :** With a view to improving the lot of the prisoners and making them useful law-abiding citizens, they are provided with healthy and congenial atmosphere. Amenities such as radios, newspapers, other recreational facilities and moral and religious lectures are also provided to them. Vocational training is imparted to the jail inmates in carpentry, cane work and gardening. A part-time teacher is attached to teach the prisoners. The Chief Medical Officer of the district looks after the health of the prisoners periodically duly assisted by a whole-time dispenser. There is only one visitor (M.I.C.) appointed to visit the jail monthly on behalf of the District Magistrate. The Government has recently granted some concessions for the prisoners of this open air jail which are as under :

- (i) The prisoners are paid pocket money at the rate of 35 paise per day out of their wages earned by them subject to the availability of money at their credit.
- (ii) The prisoners are allowed to spend up to 25% of their net earnings in supplementing their daily diet with ghee, milk etc. They are also allowed to purchase leather shoes etc. out of the money in their credit and remit money to their homes out of the wages earned by them.

**Treatment of special classes of prisoners :** The jail is administered according to the procedure laid down in *the Punjab Jails Manual* which stands applied to Himachal Pradesh and as such to the Bilaspur district also. The prisoners are classified in accordance with the said *Manual* into three classes, namely, A, B & C.

So far the prisoners' behaviour has been good and no case of escape or complaint was reported. Some of the convicts released from the open air jail were employed by the local Public Works Department and they are proving to be obedient and hard working. Some were employed by private firms also. Their conduct and behaviour with the public and officials seemed to be very good.

## CIVIL AND CRIMINAL COURTS

The history of the system of administration of justice in the district dates back to the advent of the settled form of Government evolved, more than twelve centuries ago, when law and order were established and daily

life regulated by custom and usage. It synchronises with the clearing of woods and forests from the western extremity of the then vast territories of the erstwhile State, when the rule of jungle practised by the Ruhunds and robbers disappeared, once for all, and colonisation of the area by peace loving and law abiding tribes began. The sovereign, then was the fountain head of law and formed the highest court of justice. He was assisted by his ministers or wazir in whose hands rested the practical management of every department. In the darbar, which was a regular feature of court life, the people came to complain and to get their grievances redressed. Regular files were not considered necessary and were not maintained. The justice was administered by the word of mouth. Executions, as was customary, were prompt and swift.

As society progressed the darbar still continued but the area of the State was divided into various administrative units namely, Ratanpur, Bahadurpur, Fatehpur, Tiun and Sariun, Jhanjhar, Kot Kahlur, Baseh and Bachhretu each under a *Kiladar* who exercised certain judicial powers of a minor nature in addition to his duties as a *Faujdar*. In minor cases, heads of villages or *saaths* settled local disputes. Feudatories and jagirdars had powers of arbitration and punishment within their own jurisdictions. The State used to get one-fourth of the amount finally decreed by the court as court fee. Fines were entered in a separate ledger kept for the purpose.

The State, besides the tahsils, was further divided into twelve parganas. Though these still exist yet have no great administrative importance. They stand merged in the existing two tahsils. Sadar tahsil includes parganas of Sadar, Ratanpur, Bahadurpur, Fatehpur and Kot Kahlur and tahsil Ghamarwin includes parganas of Baseh, Bachhretu, Gherwin, Sunhani, Ajmerpur, Tiun and Sariun. In the reign of Raja Hira Chand the erstwhile State was divided for administrative purposes, into five tahsils, viz. Bilaspur, Panjgain, Fatehpur, Tiun and Sunhani; four years later when parganas Baseh and Bachhretu were restored to the State, a sixth tahsil Bachhretu was added. The six Tahsildars working at the headquarters sat as courts of law in their circles submitting their findings for final orders to the raja who looked into every case personally and pronounced his orders verbally. In cases of murder regular files were maintained in the *muhafiz-khana* the foreign office (record office). His successor Raja Amar Chand amalgamated the six tahsils into two divisions on either side of the river Satluj in 1885 and placed a wazir in charge of each. Regular files of cases then began to be maintained in Tankri script by 1898. Urdu came to be adopted as a court language in conformity with the practice in the rest of the Punjab. The administrative divisions created by Raja Amar Chand

continued till 1905 in the form of the two tahsils whose Tahsildars were invested with certain criminal powers.

By 1910 various civil and criminal courts had been organised. The Tahsildars and *Naib-Tahsildars* enjoyed the powers of the Magistrate second and third Class respectively. There was a civil judge to dispose of civil cases. The wazir exercised the powers of a District Magistrate in criminal matters, and of a District Judge in civil. He also had overall control in revenue matters, but all his orders and decisions were appealable to the raja. Further improvements in the organisation of the court would seem to have taken place subsequently, and by 1942-43 the judicial system, briefly, comprised on the criminal side, the court of Sessions Judge, the court of the District Magistrate, the court of the Magistrate I Class and the court of the Magistrate II Class; on the civil side, the court of the District Judge, the court of the Sub Judge, I Class, and the court of the Sub Judge II Class. All the courts were subject to the appellate jurisdiction of the High Court (*Ijlas-i-Alia*). The *Ijlas-i-Alia* (raja) had the right of superintendence over every court and it called for regular monthly returns, issued general rules of practice and procedure for them, prescribed books and forms to be used, and, settled fees for clerks and petition writers. Legal practitioners were not allowed. But in murder cases the accused was allowed the option of engaging a defence counsel whose fees and charges were paid by the State in *pauperis causa*. The petition writers were subject to the control and supervision of the Judicial Secretary and their practice was governed by the rules framed in that behalf.

The *Punjab Courts Act* had been applied *mutatis mutandis*, in 1949. Before its enforcement all appeals from the court of the Sub Judge, First Class, irrespective of the value of the suit, lay with the court of the District Judge. But after the *Act* was applied it prescribed limits in this connection, too. Otherwise the District Judge's court was the first Civil Appellate court; the *Ijlas-i-Alia* the final. But both the courts also exercised original civil jurisdiction. In the *Ijlas-i-Alia* miscellaneous applications and oral complaints, under a time honoured custom, were freely and regularly heard and decided. These formed a considerable part of the civil and criminal work of the court. In the court of the District and Sessions Judge a certain class of matrimonial cases were decided summarily. This was an amenity granted to community by custom and usage and was likely to cease but slowly. On the criminal side the High Court consisting of two Judges, was the highest court of criminal justice in the State. Besides exercising general powers of revision as defined in the *Criminal Procedure Code* over the subordinate courts and hearing appeals against the decision of the Sessions Court this court exercised original jurisdiction in miscellaneous cases. Sentences

of death passed by the Sessions Judge were subject to confirmation by this court.

When the State was integrated in the Indian Union on the 12th October, 1948, as a separate centrally administered area the new set up of the civil and criminal courts was re-organised with effect from 1.3.1949 according to which the Judicial Commissioner, Himachal Pradesh became also the Judicial Commissioner for Bilaspur, exercising the jurisdiction and powers of the High Court. Besides, there was a District and Sessions Judge, the District Magistrate, a Senior Sub Judge and a Magistrate I Class with power under section 30 of the *Criminal Procedure Code* and Magistrate I Class-cum-Tahsildar for tahsil Ghamarwin and Magistrate II Class-cum-Tahsildar for Sadar tahsil.

To ensure uniformity in the establishment of courts certain changes were effected. Now on the criminal side there is the court of the District Magistrate at New Bilaspur Township with jurisdiction coterminous with the limits of the district. The presiding officer of the courts is usually the Deputy Commissioner with powers of a District Magistrate and the Collector with headquarters at New Bilaspur Township. Below him are three Magistrates of the I Class with jurisdiction extending over the whole of district including the Sub Divisional Officer (Civil) and General Assistant. The Sub Divisional Officer (Civil) Ghamarwin also functions as Magistrate I Class within the limits of Ghamarwin Sub Division.

They also act as *ilaka* Magistrates and have allotted to them police stations. Both the *ilaka* Magistrates entertain revision petitions in criminal cases of the panchayats in respect of their *ilakas*. The Tahsildars of Sadar and Ghamarwin exercise, within the local limits of respective tahsils, the powers of a Magistrate II Class and discharge the duties of Tahsildars. On the civil side there is the court of the Sub Judge at Ghamarwin and the court of Senior Sub Judge-cum-Assistant Sessions Judge exercising jurisdiction within the local limits of the district. He enjoys unlimited powers in civil suits and also powers under the *Small Cause Courts Act*, the *Rent Restriction Act*, the *Guardian and Wards Act*, the *Indian Succession Act*, the *Provincial Insolvency Act* (as District Court) and the powers of Assistant Sessions Judge. Superior to the court of the Assistant Sessions Judge is the court of the District and Sessions Judge with jurisdiction extending over the Bilaspur district. At the apex is the Himachal High Court at Simla. It has the original, appellate and revisional jurisdiction all over Himachal Pradesh.

The position of appellate and revisional work is that the District Magistrate entertains appeals in such cases as prescribed by the *Criminal Procedure Code*. If and when empowered to do so he can hear revisions too. The Assistant Sessions Judge is competent to hear appeals arising out



of the orders passed by Magistrates of the II and III classes. He also entertains revision petitions in civil cases of the panchayats in the district. The Sessions Judge has the appellate and revisional jurisdiction over all the subordinate courts as prescribed in the *Criminal Procedure Code*. He holds his court, so far as the cases relating to Bilaspur district are concerned, at Bilaspur even though his headquarters is at Simla. Finally the Himachal High Court exercise appellate and revisional powers over all courts situated within the limits of Himachal Pradesh including those located in the district. There are no circuit courts for remote areas. The court of the District and Sessions Judge is the circuit court and he holds court at Bilaspur for hearing cases relating to that district.

Supervisory and administrative control over the subordinate magistracy in the district is exercised by the District Magistrate and the Sessions Judge with the overall superintendence and control by the Himachal High Court, by means of inspections and scrutiny of their monthly and quarterly business returns.

### **Panchayat Adalats**

Organisation of panchayat *adalats* or judicial panchayats, more commonly called the *nyaya* panchayats, is an element of democratization of the judiciary at the base of the whole judicial machinery. Previously there were forty *nyaya* panchayats in this district but after the second re-organisation, the number of these panchayats was raised to sixty-eight. Since the third re-organisation, eighty-one *gram sabhas* have been formed and the number of *nyaya* panchayats is also likely to be raised to eighty-one. Following the elections, the *panches*, *naib-sarpanches*, and *sarpanches*, are imparted necessary training to equip them efficiently to conduct their business. The panchayats so established started functioning by the beginning of the year 1959. The entire organisation of these panchayats is regulated by the *Himachal Pradesh Panchayati Raj Act, 1968*.

### **Separation of Executive and Judiciary**

It was perhaps in the middle of 1939 that judiciary in the district (then State) was completely separated from and independent of the Executive. The Judicial Secretary, subject to the control, directions and supervision of the *Ijlas-i-Alia* (ruler) continued solely incharge of the Judicial Department; all other departments, previously under his control having been transferred elsewhere. Criminal powers of Tahsildars were withdrawn. The Courts of the Collector and the District Magistrate were allowed to remain joint till the new system got firmly established. Different tribunals were appointed to administer the civil laws and dispense justice. Minor departments, mainly

concerned with courts of law, such as the Nazarat, the Record Officer, the Copying Agency etc., remained under the Judicial Secretary. In furtherance of this system, by 1954 only law graduates could be appointed in the cadre of judiciary. But this system soon came to an end because Bilaspur became a part of Himachal Pradesh where the judicial and executive function had not been separated.

After the merger the Magistrates, besides acting as Presiding Officers of the Criminal Courts, have to discharge various and multifarious duties inasmuch as Magistrate may be assigned the functions of an Assistant Collector, First Grade or a Land Acquisition Officer or of a Compensation Officer or of a Managing Officer or of a Treasury Officer or of a General Assistant to the Deputy Commissioner.

It is not necessary that one particular Magistrate is required to perform all these functions, but the work is distributed among all the Magistrates in the district, after taking into consideration local situation and administrative convenience.

Organisation of panchayat *adalats* or the judicial panchayats is, however, what may be called a modest beginning of the system of separation of judiciary from the executive at the base of judicial office.

The present system of exercising executive and judicial functions by one man is regarded far from satisfactory. Due to multifariousness of the executive duties assigned to the Magistrates they can devote but little attention to the judicial work which invariably causes delay in the disposal of cases giving rise to difficulties and inconvenience to the litigant public. Moreover, independence of judiciary cannot be maintained which is a pre-requisite of democracy.

### LEGAL PROFESSION AND BAR ASSOCIATION

The only Bar Association in the district known as District Bar Association Bilaspur, was founded on August 11, 1949 with its office situated at Bilaspur proper. All classes of legal practitioners practising at Bilaspur are eligible to its membership on payment of an admission fee of rupees five and monthly subscription of rupees five. Present strength of its membership is nineteen. This association is affiliated with the Himachal Pradesh Bar Council. The association does not maintain its own library or reading room for want of accommodation and funds.

# Chapter XIII

## OTHER DEPARTMENTS

### PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

The Department of Public Works appears to have been organised after 1932. Prior to the year 1932 necessity for such a Department could hardly be felt as there were few public buildings and fewer roads to look after. The existing roads required no expert skill for their construction or maintenance. No programme of road construction of modern specifications was contemplated. If any new buildings were proposed to be constructed these were usually of the old prevailing type whose technique the local workmen knew well. Modern technical knowledge was rarely necessary and when needed could be hired temporarily. An administrative official was, therefore, generally incharge of the State works. A *Daroga* of buildings was appointed to see the construction work through. A trained Overseer was also appointed and the repair of roads was entrusted to Road *Jamadar*. The Overseer worked under the directions of the then Revenue Member.

By the year 1942-43 the State regime appointed a State Engineer-cum-Secretary to look after the Public Works Department. He was assisted in his work by an Overseer, a *Jamadar* and three masons, and of the latter one was detailed for general repair work, the other looking after the general works and the third ensured the proper water-supply. Four Managers had been looking after the State Buildings located at Varanasi, Mathura, Hardwar and Simla.

After the merger, as elsewhere, the development and maintenance of existing roads, construction of new roads, looking after minor irrigation schemes and drinking water-supply schemes fell within the charge of the Public Works Department. In this district the Department has also been responsible for the construction of the New Bilaspur Township which in fact has been a major project under it.

To start with, after the formation of Himachal Pradesh, the Government of India sanctioned a post of the Principal Engineering Officer with four divisions and sixteen sub-divisions with effect from December, 1948 under the overall control of the Central Public Works Department. Two divisions one after the other, in September and October, 1949, were abolished

and soon the control by the Central Public Works Department was transferred to the Himachal Pradesh Public Works Department with effect from March, 1950, when the Government of India sanctioned two permanent divisions with eight sub-divisions placed under the control of the aforesaid Principal Engineering Officer for the Pradesh with headquarters at Simla.

After the inception of separate Public Works Department, exclusively for Himachal Pradesh this organisation continued to grow gradually. For the sake of smooth working and administrative convenience the territory of Himachal Pradesh stands split up into 8 civil circles of which Bilaspur district falls under IV circle of Himachal Pradesh Public Works Department. This circle stands further sub-divided into five different divisions two of which are stationed at Bilaspur. There are 4 to 5 sub-divisions in each division. All told there are 9 sub-divisions in the district. The succeeding table gives a picture of divisions and sub-divisions with their location.

| S. No. | Name of Division                     | Sub-Division                        | Headquarters | Whether Permanent or Temporary |
|--------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------------|
| 1.     | Bilaspur Division No. I (Permanent)  | (i) Bilaspur sub-division No. I.    | Bilaspur     | Permanent                      |
|        |                                      | (ii) Barthin sub-division.          | Barthin      | Temporary                      |
|        |                                      | (iii) Ghamarwin sub-division No. I. | Ghamarwin    | Permanent                      |
|        |                                      | (iv) Ghamarwin sub-division No. II. | Ghamarwin    | Temporary                      |
| 2.     | Bilaspur Division No. II (Temporary) | (i) Bilaspur sub-division No. II.   | Bilaspur     | Permanent                      |
|        |                                      | (ii) Bilaspur sub-division No. III. | Bilaspur     | Temporary                      |

|       |  |          |           |
|-------|--|----------|-----------|
| (iii) | Namol<br>sub-division.                     | Namol    | Temporary |
| (iv)  | Swarghat<br>sub-division.                  | Swarghat | Permanent |
| (v)   | Public Health<br>sub-division<br>Bilaspur. | Bilaspur | Temporary |

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The notable buildings, in addition to New Bilaspur Township, constructed by the Public Works Department in the district are mentioned belows.

1. D. C. Court and allied office Buildings.
2. Local P. W. D. Buildings.
3. Circuit House.
4. Dholra Rest-House and N. B. T. Rest-Houses.
5. District Hospital.
6. Degree College Complex.
7. Bus-stand.
8. Shopping Sector Comprising 14 shops.
9. Higher Secondary School for Girls.
10. High School for Boys.
11. Two Primary Schools.
12. Veterinary Hospital Complex.
13. Open Air Jail.
14. Crafts Centre.
15. Transport office-cum-workshop.
16. District Library Building.
17. Police Colony.
18. Residential quarters for Government employees.

The duties of each officer are briefly described below.

A division is sub-divided into sub-divisions, by far the smallest unit in the Department, in the charge of a Sub-Divisional Officer who maintains the initial accounts of cash and stores concerning his unit. He ensures that all account returns are compiled correctly and submitted punctually to the Divisional Officer. He is responsible to see that the value of stores, sold to municipality, if any, to other local bodies and public, and, issues made to the contractors for private use is recovered in cash, in advance. He is also responsible for clearance of all work accounts outstanding against contractors on account of recoverable value of materials issued and services rendered to them. As the accounts of works are based on the muster roll and the measurement book, it is an important function of the Sub-Divisional Officer to see that these initial records are written up neatly in accordance with prescribed rules to avoid all doubts about their authenticity.

A division is the executive unit of the Department, under the charge of the Divisional Officer who is responsible to the Superintending Engineer for the efficient execution and management of all works within his division and, therefore, he organises and supervises the execution of works. He can transfer establishment from one station to another within his jurisdiction subject to transfer rules. As a primary disbursing officer he is responsible for the financial regularities of the transactions and is, therefore, required to obtain cash for the work under his control. He is required to inspect, at least once a year, the more important buildings and works in his division and is responsible for their maintenance. The Divisional Officer administers the grant made for public works, in his division, to keep a close watch over the progress of expenditure to avoid excesses to occur. He reconciles the expenditure figures recorded in his book with that of the audit officer's book.

The administrative unit of the Department is the circle, under the charge of Superintending Engineer. He examines the books of Divisional Officers and other subordinates and ensures that matters relating to the primary accounts are attended to personally by the Divisional or Sub-Divisional Officers and that accounts fairly represent the progress of each sub-head of a work in accordance with the sanctioned estimate. He is supposed to investigate excesses over sub-head with a view to decide whether or not a revised estimate is required and that it is submitted to the sanctioning authority in time. He inspects various works within his circle and satisfies that the management prevailing is efficient and economical and that different stores are duly verified and there is no accumulation of stock in any of the divisions, beyond its requirements. He has to see that no delay is allowed to occur in the submission of complete reports and inspects, periodically, all

important public buildings and other works within his jurisdiction as also divisional offices once a year, and records the results of such inspections. He satisfies himself that the staff employed in each division is actually necessary and adequate. During his tours he checks that measurement books are carefully kept and measurements recorded properly. He is authorised to correspond direct with any of the local authorities, civil or military, within the area of his jurisdiction.

At the apex the Chief Engineer is responsible to the Government of Himachal Pradesh. General professional control of public works vests in him and he functions as the chief professional advisor, in all matters connected with them, to the Government. He exercises full administrative, technical and supervisory control over the entire administrative set up including the Superintending Engineer, the Senior Architect and other departmental officers.

### WILD LIFE ORGANISATION

There is a great potential for the development of wild life in Bilaspur. Gobind Sagar is attracting thousands of water fowl annually and the lake has been declared, by the Government, as "Water Fowl Refuge" since December, 1962. These innumerable fowls are killed for game and for food when they permanently settle in the lake. In an area known as Naina Devi sanctuary *neelgai*, ghoral, barking deer, sambhar, martins, civet cats, foxes, *kaleej* pheasant, red jungle fowl and partridges are found. The sanctuary covers an area of about 16,335 hectares.

Adequate protection of wild life which is our national heritage, is a must and needs proper conservancy measures. For this purpose, a Wild Life Organisation under the Forest Department was created during the year 1957. A staff of one Range Officer (Wild Life) and four Guards was provided under the Fourth Five Year Plan. Thus under the Fifth Five Year Plan, emphasis is being laid for more supervisory staff, not only for the protection of wild life in the Water Fowl Refuge and Naina Devi sanctuary, but also for forest and non-forest areas of the district to enforce the game laws rigidly and for proper management of wild life.

Schemes for the development of wild life and tourism in the district have been taken up by the Department of Tourism. These are for provision of amenities to the tourists in the shape of fishing, boating, swimming, duck photograph shooting, wild life shooting in shooting blocks, situated around the lake, namely, Bhakra, Saloa, Badoh, Dharot, Zakatkhana, Ghaneri, Malhot, Malwan, Kothi, Goodwan, Sandheri and Bachhretu.

By improving the habitat of the Gobind Sagar, a larger number of migrating water fowl can be attracted to visit the lake every year. Ducks like mallard and pintails can also be tried in the lake and if all those varieties are released in the lake, the tourist potential will also increase considerably. Schemes are afoot to conserve, preserve and multiply the important species of forest animals as well as birds.

For the convenience of the hunters proper arrangements are made for the issue of shooting licences, during shooting period i.e. 15th October to 31st March, on payment of necessary fees. These licences can be had either from the Wild Life Warden, Himachal Pradesh at Simla or from the nearest Divisional Forest Officer. The organisation at the State level is headed by the Wild Life Warden (the technical head of the Department) who advises the Government on the proper management of wild life in the State. The Chief Conservator of Forests, Himachal Pradesh is, however, the controlling head of the wing.

### FISHERIES DEPARTMENT

Prior to the existence of Fisheries Department in Himachal Pradesh, the fisheries administration was under the control of the Agriculture Department. In early 1949, on the invitation of the Government of Himachal Pradesh, the Assistant Fisheries Development Advisor to the Government of India visited the State to study the position of fisheries and to report the possibilities of its development. He recommended that in order to organise the conservation and development of fisheries in Himachal Pradesh a separate fisheries staff may have to be recruited. As a result of his recommendations the Fisheries Department came into being in August, 1950, in Himachal Pradesh. Up to late 1964 this Department remained as a wing of the Forest Department, the Chief Conservator of Forests being its Head of the Department, while the Director of Fisheries was declared as a technical Head of the Fisheries wing for all intents and purposes. For the development and management of Fisheries in the district, a Fisheries Division under the administrative control of the Assistant Director of Fisheries, declaring him the Head of the office, was established in the year 1961, with the following objectives :—

1. Management of Fisheries wealth;
2. Management of riverine fisheries through enforcement of fisheries legislation, creation of fish sanctuaries and salvaging of fish fry from the drying and stranded stretches of water ;



3. Development of Fisheries through culture and propagation, including culture of exotic variety of Mirror Carp with a view to raise food potentials of the State ;
4. Organisation, exploitation and marketing of fish;
5. Providing technical assistance and training to Block and Panchayat staff and prospective farmers;
6. Providing employment to the fishing community of the district in order to augment their otherwise meagre earnings.

As a result of construction of a dam across river Satluj at Bhakra a vast reservoir namely Gobind Sagar having an area of 168 sq km came into existence in the year 1962. In order to fully utilise this stretch of water for development of fisheries a long term project was planned in which continuous stocking of reservoir with suitable varieties of fish was one of the foremost items. To meet this end in consultation with the fisheries experts of Government of India, it was decided to stock the reservoir with Mirror Carp fish of upland waters and it was estimated that some 50 million of Mirror Carp fingerlings shall be required to stock the same. To achieve this end, chain of fish seed farms around Gobind Sagar was proposed to be established and accordingly a Mirror Carp Farm at Deoli was established in the year 1962 at a cost of Rs. 3.6 lacs, with an area of 11 acres with the capacity to produce one million of Mirror Carp fry per annum, for stocking thereof into the reservoir and other impounded waters. Since 1962 to 1973, 7.51 million of Mirror Carp fingerlings were raised at this farm, out of which 6.61 million had been stocked into the Gobind Sagar and rest in the other impounded waters. Besides, the culture of gold fish, silver carp and grass carp has also been undertaken at the said farm.

The exploitation of fish from Gobind Sagar reservoir was undertaken by evolving the Gill nets which were found suitable for fishing in the deep waters and licensed fishermen as well as the Fisheries Department are exploiting fish therewith. The licensed fishermen are landing approximately 350 to 400 metric tonnes of fish valued at Rs. 8 to 10 lacs per annum. The Department has exploited some 1,22,199 kg of fish and sold to the local populace from the year 1966-67 to 1972-73 worth Rs. 1,64,532.00. The license fee realised by the Department from 1967-68 to 1972-73 comes to Rs.58,725.00. At present more than 250 fishermen are engaged in exploitation of fish from the Gobind Sagar. They have also been brought into the fold of co-operative societies and they have formed two such societies. Possibilities of forming a Fisheries Corporation are also being explored for this reservoir. The feasibility of a pilot processing scheme of fish of Gobind Sagar reservoir is also being examined.

In the field of conservation the watch and ward staff has been posted at the strategic points to enforce fisheries legislation under which a rational licensing system has been adopted and wanton and destructive methods of fishing have been prohibited. There are about 660 fishermen who have been registered by the Department under the rules for the regulation of fishing. The conservatory staff of the Department in the district as well as posted on the Gobind Sagar reservoir consists of Fisheries Officers, Sub-Inspectors, Field Assistants and fishermen. There are at present 3 Fisheries Officers, one each posted at Bilaspur, Deoli and Zakatkhana.

Above the district level there is a Director of Fisheries, the technical Head of the Department, to guide and control the entire fisheries work of the Pradesh in addition to usual administrative works. He is responsible for the administration of fisheries legislation, enforcement of conservancy measures, propagation of fish through cultural practices and research work with a view to ensure and develop the fisheries wealth of the Pradesh.

### WELFARE DEPARTMENT

Although the work relating to the welfare of scheduled castes and tribes was started as early as 1953-54, but it was done by part-time officers till March, 1958, when separate Directorate was created in the State.

No separate field staff in the district was appointed during the First and Second Five Year Plans and most of the schemes pertaining to welfare of backward classes were either implemented through the district level staff of the different departments like Medical, Industries, Agriculture, Education, Forests etc., or got implemented through the Deputy Commissioner. Probation-cum-Welfare Officer Bilaspur district has been appointed to assist the Deputy Commissioner in the matter of ensuring timely and effective implementation of Welfare schemes aimed at amelioration of the backward classes. The Deputy Commissioner also co-ordinates the various schemes. All welfare schemes are taken up for implementation after discussion in the *Zila Parishad* Bilaspur.

On the organisational side, at the district level, there are, *Zila Parishad* and the District Welfare Committee with the Deputy Commissioner as Chairman and the District Welfare Officer as member-Secretary. At the block level are block *Samitis* with a non-official Chairman and Block Development Officer as Secretary.

### INDUSTRIES DEPARTMENT

After the merger of the State, in 1954, the Department of Industries, Himachal Pradesh, extended its activities to this district and it was placed

under the charge of the District Industries Officer, Mandi, who looked after it up to August, 1959, whereafter a District Industries Officer was appointed. The district was divided into three community development blocks, each provided with an Extension Officer (Industries) to look after the industrial expansion programme in the block. At present there is a District Industries Officer and three Block Extension Officers.

There exist a number of training centres, primarily intended for imparting training to improve the skill of the hereditary artisans and to create skilled personnel to man the industries in the Pradesh.

Extension Officer is directly under the control of the Block Development Officer. He is required to initiate schemes and to execute rural arts and crafts programme in the block as well as to guide rural people in the organisation of cottage and small scale industries. He is responsible for the publicity work regarding the facilities provided by the Industries Department.

#### PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT

According to the revised set up, a District Public Relations Officer with headquarters at Bilaspur deals with public relations matters. The District Public Relations Officer is in-charge of all works pertaining to information, publicity, mass communication and public relations in the district. He acts as a link between the Government offices and the press and keeps himself in touch with offices of various departments in the district. He issues to the press the news items which supply factual information on schemes and activities of the Government in the district. He also organises visits of pressmen to various development works in the district as and when considered necessary and organises press conferences to provide an opportunity to the press to get first hand knowledge of the subject to be covered. He acts as a correspondent of the Directorate of Public Relations, Himachal Pradesh and covers, on its behalf, working of activities and the schemes of Government, press conferences, etc. He discharges two-way functions of keeping the people informed of the work of the Government and of keeping the Government informed of the public opinion and needs and grievances of the people. He issues regular press notes and hand-outs giving factual information about important schemes and activities of Government and issues rejoinders in consultation with the department concerned, to the news papers.

As in other districts of the State the District Public Relations Officer is provided with a van and a 16 mm projector. It is taken round the district and film shows and talks which are both instructive and entertaining are arranged on various nation building activities such

as agriculture, cattle improvement, health, prohibition, untouchability, small savings, education, Five Year Plans, family planning, etc. He keeps the rural-folk informed of the concessions and facilities offered to them by the State and Central Governments and also distributes leaflets, pamphlets, posters, etc., on items of public interest. He is assisted in his day-to-day duties by an Assistant Public Relations Officer, an Assistant Radio Engineer, 2 Project Operators, 2 Radio Mechanics and other ministerial staff.

An Information Centre also exists at Bilaspur, where books, periodicals etc., bearing on the Five Year Plans, and its progress are displayed. It serves as a useful centre of information for the whole of Bilaspur district. The District Public Relations Officer has distributed 350 community listening sets in the district.

The organisational set up at the State level is a Director of Public Relations. He is assisted by a Joint Director and two Deputy Directors, an Editor, a Technical Officer and a Film and Photo Officer.

#### ANIMAL HUSBANDRY DEPARTMENT

The Officer at the district level in-charge of animal husbandry activities is the District Animal Husbandry Officer. He is responsible technically to the Director of Animal Husbandry, Himachal Pradesh. The main functions of the District Animal Husbandry Officer are to carry out schemes relating to improvements of the breed of cattle, protection of cattle against contagious diseases, castration of scrub animals and other developmental activities relating to animal husbandry. He runs various schemes for the development of poultry, sheep rearing and piggery. He is assisted in his work by 9 Veterinary Assistant Surgeons, 6 Veterinary Compounders and 28 Stock Assistants. The Veterinary Hospitals are located at Bilaspur, Ghamarwin, Barthin, Jukhala, Bassi and Dashlera. Besides, there are 7 Veterinary Dispensaries located at Bharari, Chhakon, Jhandutta, Kalol, Kaphara, Hatwar and Kakrana each under the charge of a Stock Assistant. There are two Veterinary Check Posts at Swarghat and Toba. At present there are 3 Veterinary outlying dispensaries functioning at Bharoli Kalan, Chalahli and Merhana in the district. Two key village blocks are also functioning in the district at Bilaspur and Ghamarwin. These blocks are further split up into units. The Bilaspur Block contains 8 units located at Bilaspur, Kothipura, Zakatkhan, Beri, Bagibanola, Delag, Chandpur and Deoth. The Ghamarwin Block possesses 7 units functioning at Ghamarwin, Bagher, Barsandh, Dadhol, Barthin, Kothi and Kuthera. There is a Government livestock breeding farm at Kothipura in the district.

## HIMACHAL PRADESH STATE ELECTRICITY BOARD

The vast Hydro-electric potentials have remained untapped in this Pradesh since long. The electricity section was attached to the Public Works Department of Himachal Pradesh. In March, 1964 a well organised Multipurpose Projects and Power Department was created in order to investigate and execute multipurpose and other hydel projects in this Pradesh. On 25th January, 1971, Himachal Pradesh attained State-hood, and an Electricity Board was created with effect from 1.4.1971.

The State Electricity Board in its functional form came into existence from 1.9.1971. The assets and liabilities of Multipurpose Projects and Power were also transferred to the Board.

This Department was entrusted with the duties of looking after generation, transmission and distribution of electrical energy in the remote and scattered villages of Himachal Pradesh. The Department is also concerned with the investigations of a number of important dam sites where power generation and irrigation schemes are being planned. There are in all 4 electrical circles in Himachal. There are two Divisional Engineers functioning in Bilaspur district, one is on the Electrical side and the other on Grid Sub-Station, Construction Division. The Bilaspur Electrical Division is divided into 6 Sub-Divisions namely Bilaspur Sub-Division No. I, II and III, Ghamarwin Sub-Divisions No. 1 and II and Swarghat Sub-Division. On the investigation and planning side there is only one division with headquarters at Simla.

One of the executive units of the Department is the division in the charge of a Divisional Officer, commonly designated as Executive Engineer, who is responsible to the Superintending Engineer for the efficient execution and management of all works within his division.

The departmental organisation above the district level may now be outlined briefly. In immediate control of the Superintending Engineer, with his headquarters at Mandi, are the Executive Engineers. Above the Superintending Engineer is the Chief Engineer, who is the Head of the Department and is responsible for the administrative and technical implementation of the policies. At the headquarters the Chief Engineer is assisted by an Engineer Officer, a Superintending Surveyor of Works, a Superintending Engineer (Civil) and three Surveyors of Works.

In District Bilaspur, investigation work of the check dams on the various directly draining tributaries of Satluj are in progress. These tributaries bring enormous of silt every year into Gobind Sagar as a result

of which the Bhakra Reservoir is being silted up at a much increased rate than anticipated. Due to increased rate of siltation, the life of the Bhakra Dam is being reduced every year. To start with this Department has taken in hand the investigation of Seer and Ghamber *khads*—two major directly draining tributaries of river Satluj. The investigations of these *khads* are near completion and the check dams when constructed will go a long way in enlarging the life of the Bhakra Dam.

The Electricity Board is engaged in laying a net work of transmission and distribution lines and making the electricity available in the remote corners to the village populations. To maintain the existing lines over and across difficult hilly area, though not an easy job, but continuity of supply is being maintained at all costs.

#### DEPARTMENT OF HORTICULTURE

At the district level the work of horticulture is looked after by the District Horticulture Officer with headquarters at Bilaspur. His functions are to exercise technical and administrative control over various seed multiplication farms; to hold the supply line to development blocks by arranging distribution of improved fruit plants, fertilizers, plant protection equipment, insecticides and fungicides, and improved implements; to distribute improved fruit plants on subsidized rates and loans in connection with horticultural development. He is assisted by 2 Horticultural Inspectors, 3 Sub Inspectors and 2 Horticultural Supervisors in the horticultural development works. The department of Horticulture also maintains an Olive and Pomegranate Research Station, Kothipura and 5 Progeny-cum-Demonstration Orchards located at Kothipura, Nihal, Nihari, Saloa and Baroha. The progeny-cum-demonstration orchard at Kothipura has been transferred to the Animal Husbandry Department.

The Bilaspur district with its wide variety of topographic, soil and climatic conditions offers an enormous scope for all round development of horticulture. Horticultural development is significantly supplementing the low income of the people of the district. Apart from this it has manifold impact on them like provision of nutritive diet to the people, checking up of soil erosion in the catchment areas of the national projects like Bhakra Dam and Beas-Satluj Link etc., increasing employment potential of horticulture based industries and proper utilization of area which otherwise cannot be put to agriculture.

The simple minded people of the district have taken to horticulture with great zeal. This has led to the proliferation of orchards and

consequently the production of fruits has also increased considerably with the result that the hills which were once associated with perennial poverty, are today looking forward to a bright economic future. The efforts were made to augment the supply of fruit plants from the nurseries by top working the plants. There is an abundant growth of a large variety of inferior fruits like wild pear, wild peach, olive and wild apricot, in this district. Changing of wild fruit trees into superior varieties is an important item in the development of horticulture.

### FOREST DEPARTMENT

Towards the end of the 19th century a Forest Department under a Forest Officer trained at Dehra Dun organised for the conservancy and control of the forests of the erstwhile Bilaspur State. The interests of the State were rigidly safeguarded in accordance with the Forest Settlement and rules and regulations for its governance. A comprehensive plan of working the forests was also drawn up.

It was as early as about 1872 that the attention of the authorities in the erstwhile Bilaspur State was first drawn towards regular forest conservation, alongwith that of other States in the hills. But nothing definite seemed to have been done till fourteen years later. Only forest watchmen charged with the protection of forests attempted to preserve them against the unauthorised encroachments of the villagers. No fees were charged by the State for trees allowed to be cut, except that a watchman was entitled to receive a sum of four annas per permit from persons, applying for them.

In the year 1886 a separate Department to manage the forests, was organised and a regular forest policy enunciated. Fundamental forest rules were laid down and directions were issued that the forests in the State should be classified and the rights and privileges of the village communities settled.

At the beginning of the period, the dewan held the administrative control of the Forest Department. In 1934 an important change in administration was effected. A few months later the raja took the Department under his direct control and since then it remained under his personal direction and guidance.

The *Nazim* of Forests was the Head of the Department. For administrative purposes the State was divided into five ranges for executive charge and 27 beats for protective charge. Ordinarily the charge of a range would be held by a trained Forest Ranger, but owing to paucity of trained personnel all the ranges were in charge of senior Foresters. Additional

Foresters and Head Guard were employed to control the work of resin-tapping, and the dak runners for the proper distribution of dak to Range Officers.

During 1942-43 a Forester was sent up for training in the Punjab Forest School at Ghoragali. One trained Forester was sent to Mukerian in the Hoshiarpur Forest Division, where he received practical training for one month in the proper working of bamboo forests; and three Foresters received practical training in resin-tapping in Hamirpur Range of the Hoshiarpur Forest Division. This system of frequently sending members of the subordinate staff for practical training in the adjoining forests of the British Punjab, had proved very useful in adding to their knowledge and efficiency.

At present for administrative convenience, the Himachal Pradesh stands divided into six territorial forest circles. The entire district co-extensive with the Bilaspur Forest Division, under the charge of a Divisional Forest Officer falls under the Bilaspur circle under the administrative control of Conservator of Forests, with headquarters at Bilaspur. The division is further sub-divided into four ranges, namely, the Sadar Range, the Ghamarwin Range, the Naina Devi Range and Jhandutta Range, under the charge of a Range Officer, usually of the status of a Forest Ranger. Each range is further split up into three or four blocks under a Block Officer of the rank of Forester or Deputy Ranger and blocks are made of three or four beats each under a Forest Beat Guard.

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# Chapter XIV

## LOCAL SELF GOVERNMENT

### History of Local Self Government

It is in vain to look for an element of association and participation by people in the administration in the past history of Bilaspur, which was ruled by rajas, who would be least disposed to let any amount of power to slip out of their hands. On the other hand, the demand for a local self government on behalf of the people, generally illiterate and unconscious of their political rights, must have never been pressed. This state of affairs would seem to have continued till the reign of Raja Amar Chand. During the reign of his successor, Raja Bijai Chand, some *quami* panchayats of Brahmans, Thakurs and Rajputs, were formed in 1908. These bodies were purely of social character constituted to affect social reforms in the light of customs and traditions. These were, however, short-lived and there is nothing to show the results of their working. This is for the first time, in the history of Bilaspur that the name panchayat is heard of. Consequently as a part of general planning, a beginning was made with self government and local bodies in 1932. The first foundations of popular administration in the erstwhile State were laid when the Education and Health Committees at the pargana headquarters and the State headquarters came to be formed totally on the basis of election. Since then the ruler endeavoured to equip the people to enjoy certain powers and shoulder the responsibilities of a democratic regime. Two small town committees were also constituted during 1938, at Bilaspur and in 1942 at Naina Devi. More will be said about them presently. This novel experiment is said to have worked with very satisfactory results considering that affairs of the people of the State had, for centuries, been administered from the State capital, and their wishes were hardly ever ascertained except by an informal or personal contact with the ruler.

A start was made with the proposal for the constitution of a Central Education and Health Committee that would control education and health of the people in the rural areas and whose finances, to begin with, would consist of the modest sum of Rs. 5,971 realised from the education and health rate levied alongwith the land-revenue. It was also proposed to set in each pargana an Education and Health Committee elected by the people, to give effect to the proposals of the central committee and to popularise

schemes for the expansion of education and development of health in the villages. Proposal was also put forward to constitute a central education and health fund to finance the new schemes and to extend *the Small Town Act* to certain suitable areas, and to constitute small town committees there for the management of their local affairs.

Accordingly, a committee was appointed to report on the nature and extent of the problem, to suggest the franchise for the election of Education and Health Committees, to define their duties, powers and relations with one another and with the centre and to supervise the collection of funds. It was required to collect data necessary for an education and health scheme, to conduct a census of children of both sexes of school-joining age, to advise regarding the number and location of schools and to frame rules for the election of Central and Pargana Education and Health Committees. The result of its survey and deliberations was published in the form of a report in Hindi.

Such findings of this Committee on the duties, powers and relations of the Central and Pargana Committees, as met with the approval of the raja, were embodied in what was called *the Education and Health Act*. It came into force in 1939 for the regulation of the functions of these committees.

The education and health fund envisaged by the *Act* was started with a personal donation of five thousand rupees from the raja. The total amount reached the figure of sixty thousand rupees. It was largely invested in the educational publications that the State undertook.

**Small Town Committee :** To carry out the second part of the committee's report *the Punjab Small Town Act* was adopted with necessary modifications. It was extended to Bilaspur town, where Small Town Committee came to be established. Rules for election of members and the conduct of business of the Small Town Committees were framed and promulgated.

**The Central Education and Health Committee :** The Central Education and Health Committee was partly elected and partly nominated with ten members and a Chairman. The Chairman and five of the members were officials and five were elected from five one-member constituencies into which the State was divided for the purpose. These members were in the first instance elected for three years.

Universal suffrage was considered impracticable but the restrictions on adult males were only nominal. Qualifications were based on property

and land ownership, payment of land-revenue, education up to primary standard, etc. Electoral rolls were prepared long in advance and duly published. The interest of the people in the elections was quite encouraging considering that it was the first occasion of its kind in the State. The members returned were fairly representative of their territorial constituencies.

The duties of the Committee were to constitute and start health centres and to render such monetary assistance and make such arrangements regarding health as may from time to time be necessary; to institute and start primary schools and to arrange for the advancement of primary education in the State; besides opening and maintaining the primary schools to develop measures conducive to the expansion of education; to manage and maintain any property that the Committee may own or control; to prepare such statements, tables and statistics as may be ordered by the ruler; to arrange for the training and a refresher course for the teachers, and, to discharge any other responsibility that may devolve on it under the *Act*.

**Pargana Committees :** The Pargana Committees were composed only of elected members. The twelve parganas of the State formed the twelve constituencies each for their own committee. The number of members for each pargana was in proportion to its population but was not to exceed eleven. This worked out to an average of one seat for almost one thousand of population. The suffrage was adult and male with the same qualifications as for the Central Committee.

The population of the State according to the census of 1931, was about 1,01,000 and thus there were one hundred and one members of the twelve Pargana Committees. The smallest committees consisted of five members each for the parganas of Ratanpur, Fatehpur, Bachhietu and Sunhani and the largest were of eleven members each for the pargana of Ajmerpur, Tiun, Sadar, and Bahadurpur. All the twelve committees had their elected Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen. The members of the committees were considered public servants.

The duties of the Pargana Committees included; to try in every proper and possible way, arrangements for the medical assistance to the public; to arrange in every proper and possible way to provide primary educational facilities to the public; to render every assistance to the Central Committee for the discharge of their duties; and, to discharge any other responsibility that may devolve on them under the *Act*.

The Central Education and Health Committee as well as the Pargana

Committees started functioning in 1940. A month later, the members of the committee were invited to attend the budget durbar and were enrolled as State durbaris. The Central Committee had been meeting as often as was necessary but at least, once in three months, the Pargana Committees met as and when called upon to do so but, at least, once a month. Each of the committee had its own Secretary. The Secretary to the Central Committee compiled the agenda as advised by the Chairman, circulated it for information of the members of the committee. The Committee used to take its decisions in the form of resolutions which were subject to the approval of the Chairman. The Pargana Committees would meet at the request of the Chairman and the Secretary and resolve to carry out the instructions from the centre as best suited to their conditions, and, report the execution. All finances were under the control of the Central Committee. The income of the Central Committee included all sums received on account of the Bilaspur State Education and health fund; all sums received on account of the education and health rate that was levied in the State; all sums received by or on behalf of the committees under the *Act*; all sums that were granted in aid by the State, and, all sums received from the public from time to time.

As the finances of this Central Committee, to begin with, consisted only of the rate on the land-revenue, it was found to be quite inadequate to finance its various schemes. In the year 1940 twenty schools were established in the State, with twenty-seven trained teachers. Money was also needed for the distribution of quinine and other medicines in the villages. The ruler therefore, allowed a separate budget grant to the Central Committee annually to run its establishment and to expend on rural education and health. The subjoined table shows the subsidy provided for in the budget.

|                | 1940       | 1941   | 1942   |
|----------------|------------|--------|--------|
| Establishment. | Rs. 1,446  | 596    | 628    |
| Education.     | Rs. 8,676  | 10,320 | 14,750 |
| Health.        | Rs. 3,878  | 4,080  | 5,224  |
| Total          | Rs. 14,000 | 14,996 | 20,602 |

The Central and Pargana Committees played an increasing part in educating the people to make them realise the importance of schools and

health centres and to profit from their establishment. Administrative Officers, in frequent contact with the members, gave the advice, especially in matters of finance. The ruler made it a point to meet the members at least once a year to review with them the progress made, and to discuss plans for future progress.

**Municipal Committee Bilaspur :** According to the census of 1931 the population of Bilaspur town was 2,673 and the number of houses stood at seven hundred and thirteen. The town of Bilaspur stretched from north to south and its area did not exceed five square kilometres. In 1938 this area was declared to be a Small Town under the *State Small Town Act*. To administer its municipal affairs a Small Town Committee, consisting of ten members, half elected and half nominated, was established. For purposes of election, the town was divided into five wards. In 1939 the *Act* was extended to the Berighat area which formed the sixth ward. The six wards returned six members. The franchise was wide enough to include all male members of the town owning or possessing certain property in their own rights; paying certain amount of revenue, rent or tax or possessing certain educational qualifications. The Collector was appointed the Returning Officer who prepared the voters' lists and held the elections. At the expiry of the first term of office a second election was held in 1941 when the Sub-Judge First Class acted as the Returning Officer. Sometime after 1942, the strength of the committee was raised to twenty-four members, but during the regime of erstwhile part 'C' State of Bilaspur the strength of twenty-four members was considered excessive and in 1951, it was reduced to twelve elected and one nominated member. In 1953 the committee, for the first time, had one of the elected members as its President. On the merger of Bilaspur into Himachal Pradesh in 1954 the committee was suspended, under the orders of the Lieutenant Governor, Himachal Pradesh, and a Magistrate First Class was appointed as its part-time Administrator. The strength of the members was again reduced in view of the small population of the town. The membership of the committee was seven elected (including one reserved seat for scheduled castes) and two nominated. The last elections to the committee were held in July, 1956 and the members took oath of office on November 1, 1956. Their term of office expired in November, 1959, but the elections were postponed due to the submergence of the old town in Gobind Sagar and the re-settlement of New Bilaspur Township. The area under the jurisdiction of the committee was acquired for Bhakra Dam. As the old Bilaspur town has gone under-water of Gobind Sagar and the new township has emerged out rapidly in the neighbourhood of the old one, the Himachal Pradesh Administration established a seven member Municipal Committee for the New Bilaspur Township. The Revenue Assistant, Bilaspur District was nominated as ex-

*officio* President with six other official members. The total area of this committee, to start with was 510 acres (206 hectares) as fixed vide notification No. LSG-62-18054, dated the 21st September, 1961. The strength of seven members was reduced to five and the Deputy Commissioner, Bilaspur District was nominated as *ex-officio* President of the Municipal Committee, in September, 1968. The Executive Engineer, Public Works Department, New Bilaspur Township, the District Medical Officer, the Divisional Forest Officer and the Re-settlement and Re-habilitation Officer, were nominated *ex-officio* members of the committee. Since 1965 there has been no change in the composition of the committee.

According to the census of 1971 the population of the town is 7,037 and there are 1,116 houses in the committee area. Total area of the committee now is 8.88 sq km.

**Organisation and structure :** During the princely regime the committee was an autonomous body. It maintained its own office and establishment. Its main functions were collection of tax and octroi, sanitation, control of pure food and water supply. The committee met frequently, generally about fortnightly, to check and guide the work of its staff and deliberate on its future policy and planning. The Judicial Secretary of the erstwhile Bilaspur State was an *ex-officio* Chairman of the committee. The committee had, beside the elected or nominated members, the staff consisting of a Secretary, ten clerks, an overseer, a part-time sanitary inspector and thirty-seven menials including sweepers and nine peons and malis. At present the committee has, besides the *ex-officio* members, an elaborate staff consisting of a Secretary, two clerks, one Accountant, one octroi inspector, nine octroi clerks, an overseer, a whole time sanitary inspector and fifty-six menials including sweepers, peons, malis, chowkidars, *beldars*, jamadar and cattle pond keeper.

**Financial Resources :** The income of the Municipal Committee, in the past, consisted of the terminal tax, *arhat* (commission), a professional tax including all trades and callings, rent on stalls, and miscellaneous receipts. Its main items of expenditure were the establishment, sanitation and scavenging, primary education and remission of octroi. The succeeding statement gives a glimpse of income and expenditure of the committee during the princely regime.

| Income in rupees                      |       |       |       |       |
|---------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|                                       | 1939  | 1940  | 1941  | 1942  |
| 1. Octroi.                            | 6,155 | 3,960 | 4,308 | 4,694 |
| 2. <i>Arhat</i> .                     | nil   | 100   | 551   | 555   |
| 3. Consideration for lease of stalls. | 73    | 1,507 | 688   | 706   |
| 4. Professional taxes.                | 727   | 734   | 412   | 798   |
| 5. Miscellaneous.                     | 23    | 12    | 16    | 17    |
| Total :—                              | 6,970 | 6,313 | 5,975 | 6,770 |

| Expenditure in rupees |       |       |       |       |
|-----------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|                       | 1939  | 1940  | 1941  | 1942  |
| 1. Establishment      | 392   | 938   | 972   | 966   |
| 2. Sanitation         | 825   | 826   | 839   | 896   |
| 3. Primary Education  | 2,500 | 4,445 | 3,600 | 3,600 |
| 4. Remissions         | 2,079 | nil   | 26    | 232   |
| 5. Miscellaneous      | 372   | 145   | 155   | 171   |
| Total :—              | 6,168 | 6,354 | 5,592 | 5,865 |

Rs. 1,557 remained at the close of the year 1942 to the credit of the committee to form the opening balance of the year following. The auditing of accounts was done by the State Accountant yearly at the request of the committee.

By far the major source of income of committee after the merger has been the octroi tax, though other insignificant taxes are also levied to raise funds. In order to have a clearer view of the relevant financial resources and the outlet for the finances the following two tables will give assistance.

## Income in rupees

| S. No. | Sub-Head   | 1956-57 | 1957-58 | 1958-59 |
|--------|--|---------|---------|---------|
| 1.     | Taxes & Tolls.                                     | 1,684   | 1,663   | 1,721   |
| 2.     | Professional tax.                                  | 771     | 124     | 1,667   |
| 3.     | Octroi tax.  | 38,047  | 33,964  | 49,340  |
| 4.     | Licenses for the sale of articles of food & drink. | 349     | 238     | 343     |
| 5.     | Licences for storing petroleum & explosives etc.   | 64      | 48      | 48      |
| 6.     | Licences for trade in hay & coal.                  | 186     | 160     | 20      |
| 7.     | Slaughter house & market.                          | 221     | 313     | 733     |
| 8.     | Film show tax.                                     | 280     | 484     | 688     |
| 9.     | Rents.   | 716     | 800     | 880     |
| 10.    | Sale proceeds.                                     | 766     | 338     | 17      |
| 11.    | Ponds.   | 920     | 568     | 538     |
| 12.    | General grants & constructions.                    | 2,824   | —       | 6,173   |
| 13.    | Miscellaneous.                                     | 1,081   | —       | 253     |
| 14.    | Compensation for awards.                           | —       | —       | 40,462  |
| 15.    | Licences to hawkers.                               | —       | —       | —       |



| 1959-60 | 1960-61 | 1961-62 | 1962-63 | 1963-64 |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 2,158   | 1,837   | 838     | 227     | ...     |
| 817     | 398     | 482     | 17      | ...     |
| 40,469  | 40,094  | 30,795  | 2,906   | 75,385  |
| 267     | 150     | 15      | 8       | 490     |
| 10      | 20      | 5       | ...     | ...     |
| 20      | 20      | 20      | —       | —       |
| 292     | 203     | —       | —       | —       |
| 602     | 570     | 374     | —       | 5,575   |
| 508     | 727     | 248     | 58      | 3,820   |
| 1,229   | —       | 2,678   | 3,243   | 1,193   |
| 664     | 623     | 549     | 317     | 1,082   |
| —       | —       | —       | —       | 30,695  |
| 900     | 746     | 1,643   | 4       | 1,574   |
| 4,162   | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| —       | ...     | ...     | —       | ...     |

| 1964-65 | 1965-66 | 1966-67  | 1967-68 | 1968-69 |
|---------|---------|----------|---------|---------|
| —       | —       | —        | —       | —       |
| —       | —       | —        | —       | —       |
| 75,976  | 7,152   | 10,2,431 | 158147  | 145333  |
| 271     | 704     | 427      | 339     | 555     |
| 189     | —       | 636      | 636     | 556     |
| —       | 358     | 654      | —       | —       |
| —       | —       | —        | —       | 895     |
| 1,387   | 1,522   | 1,543    | 2,094   | 261     |
| 7,959   | 5,197   | 12,563   | 3,350   | 3,660   |
| —       | —       | —        | —       | —       |
| 1,642   | 1,536   | 1,133    | 1,251   | 1,071   |
| 18,576  | 10,500  | 43,350   | 19,010  | 31,855  |
| 22,280  | 439     | 320      | 2,400   | 269     |
| —       | —       | —        | —       | —       |
| —       | 264     | 365      | 228     | 294     |

| 1969-70 | 1970-71 | 1971-72 | 1972-73 | 1973-74 |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| —       | —       | —       | ...     | ...     |
| —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| 171802  | 18176   | 209235  | 199342  | 279660  |
| 436     | 428     | 450     | 494     | —       |
| 593     | 557     | 635     | 800     | —       |
| —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| 1436    | 897     | 1457    | 1469    | 1626    |
| 840     | 3,437   | 3010    | —       | —       |
| 4,271   | 3,996   | 4424    | 4457    | 8035    |
| —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| 1,032   | 65      | 611     | 802     | 856     |
| 48,320  | 1,622   | 26880   | 52110   | —       |
| 1,075   | 4,812   | 3472    | 1985    | 3218    |
| —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| 417     | 334     | 614     | 514     | 1700    |

## Expenditure (in rupees)

| Sl.<br>No. |                             | 1956-57 | 1957-58 | 1958-59 |
|------------|-----------------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1          | 2                           | 3       | 4       | 5       |
| 1.         | General and miscellaneous.  | 20923   | 22932   | 24113   |
| 2.         | Conservancy & sanitation.   | 13263   | 13378   | 15070   |
| 3.         | Water Supply.               | 667     | 769     | 1166    |
| 4.         | Drinking water supply.      | 12280   | —       | 8698    |
| 5.         | Market & slaughter houses.  | 2137    | 490     | 240     |
| 6.         | Garden and road side trees. | 6617    | 626     | 789     |
| 7.         | Dholra park and library.    | —       | 6       | —       |
| 8.         | Ponds.                      | 361     | 373     | 435     |
| 9.         | Other works and roads.      | 39457   | 2178    | 21070   |
| 10.        | Watch & ward.               | —       | —       | —       |
| 11.        | Street lighting.            | 9021    | 5641    | 7183    |
| 12.        | Tax & license department.   | —       | —       | —       |
| 13.        | Miscellaneous.              | —       | —       | —       |

| 1959-60 | 1960-61 | 1961-62 | 1962-63 | 1963-64 |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 6       | 7       | 8       | 9       | 10      |
| 28908   | 24524   | 26108   | 10701   | 44460   |
| 14444   | 14951   | 12509   | 5940    | 1320    |
| 769     | 1189    | 700     | 502     | —       |
| 630     | 504     | 446     | —       | —       |
| 262     | 240     | 140     | —       | —       |
| 965     | 698     | 761     | 352     | —       |
| 8661    | 9372    | 6726    | 300     | —       |
| 372     | 509     | 422     | 175     | —       |
| 5214    | 4349    | 3241    | 704     | 38658   |
| 3143    | 4486    | 4459    | 1800    | —       |
| 8010    | 10828   | 10231   | 2435    | 18000   |
| —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |

|     | 1964-65 | 1965-66 | 1966-67 | 1967-68 | 1968-69 |
|-----|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
|     | 11      | 12      | 13      | 14      | 15      |
| 1.  | 85631   | 53462   | 114514  | 75141   | 94509   |
| 2.  | 18481   | 13216   | 25714   | 31768   | 44582   |
| 3.  | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| 4.  | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| 5.  | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| 6.  | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| 7.  | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| 8.  | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| 9.  | 21885   | 2048    | 1473    | 15278   | 27718   |
| 10. | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| 11. | 26824   | 8288    | 31832   | 22859   | 32613   |
| 12. | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| 13. | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |

## LOCAL SELF GOVERNMENT

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| 1969-70 | 1970-71 | 1971-72 | 1972-73 | 1973-74 |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 16      | 17      | 18      | 19      | 20      |
| 114893  | 93743   | 127931  | 33774   | 35043   |
| 44836   | 58757   | 64550   | 64550   | 93966   |
| —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| —       | —       | —       | 480     | 980     |
| —       | —       | —       | 7340    | 7473    |
| —       | —       | —       | 3096    | 6556    |
| —       | —       | —       | 3487    | 3950    |
| 25975   | 64946   | 73449   | —       | —       |
| —       | —       | —       | 69235   | 33320   |
| 26000   | 26000   | 26000   | 30000   | 30000   |
| —       | —       | —       | 52614   | 69650   |
| —       | —       | —       | 6000    | 8000    |

**Municipal Committee Shri Naina Devi Ji :** Shri Naina Devi Ji temple is believed to be the nucleus of an ancient small town perched on the top of the hill. It is approachable by a motorable road forking from the National Highway No. 21 at a distance of 8 km from Swarghat (towards Chandigarh) and is about 26 km from Swarghat. At such a height supply of water and sanitation became a real problem. It was solved largely by the declaration of the town as a local body under the *State Small Town Act*, and entrusting the affairs of the town and its occasional fairs to a duly constituted committee. Experiencing the difficulties of the lighting arrangement a religious-minded man donated a small electric plant to supply light during the mela days. Since 1942 the committee has been managing its own affairs and providing with the assistance of permanent officers, the machinery for the control and comforts of the large occasional influx of pilgrims and visitors. The town committee in the past consisted of five members, three of whom were nominated by the State from amongst its officers, fourth was the nominee of the temple committee and the fifth was elected by the *pujaris*.

After the merger of State, this committee was brought under the *Punjab Small Town Act, 1921*. Prior to 1968 this was a small town committee but in 1968 it was upgraded to a Town Committee.

In 1961 the strength of the members was raised to nine. Seven non-official members including one lady and two official members. During the year 1969, the strength of the committee was reduced to eight members, six were elected and two nominated by the Government. In December, 1974, the strength of the committee members was again reduced by one member. The present strength of the members is seven, five elected and two nominated. The population of the town according to 1971 census is four hundred and ninety-four persons. The area of the town is 44 hectares. There are 199 houses in the area of the committee.

**Organisation and structure :** Subject to the control of the *Ijlas-ul-Alla* the Home Secretary as Chairman of the committee held executive charge of the committees's affairs during the princely regime. Control of the local body now rests with the Deputy Commissioner. The committee, being smaller in size than the Bilaspur Municipal Committee has lesser number of employees. The staff comprises of a Secretary, one clerk, one peon, one *mali* and four sweepers.

**Income and expenditure :** The main heads of income are rent of stalls, mela fee and octroi and the expenditure of the committee consists of water supply, conservancy, sanitation and municipal works. The water supply system in the past, consisted of tanks and natural springs. Their repairs and cleanliness formed the most important head of expenditure of the committee.



The committee also runs a Sanskrit *pathshala* in the town and prepares students for *Prajna*, *Visharada* and *Shastri* examinations.

With the recent completion of a drinking water supply scheme, the inhabitants of the town, as also over one lakh pilgrims visiting the temple annually, can now get pure drinking water. The scheme costing Rs. 1.70 lakhs presented several hurdles as water had to be pumped to a height of about 600 metres to the temple at the top of the hill. Non-availability of imported pumping sets and high pressure pipes added to the difficulties of the Public Works Department authorities. Now six pumping sets have been installed at varying heights. A big storage tank has been constructed at the source and one thousand gallon capacity tanks in the intermediate stages. A six thousand gallon capacity reservoir has also been arranged at the source.

To have a bird's eye view of the income and expenditure of the committee, under different heads of account, the following two tables will render assistance.



Income (in rupees)

| S.No. | Head of Account                                     | 1950-60  | 1960-61  |
|-------|---|----------|----------|
| 1     | 2   | 3        | 4        |
| 1.    | Professional tax.                                   | 62.00    | 68.00    |
| 2.    | Octroi tax  | 3795.00  | 4740.00  |
| 3.    | Licence for the sale of articles of food and drink. | 171.00   | 212.00   |
| 4.    | Licence for the sale of of grass, fuel and coal.    | 200.00   | 200.00   |
| 5.    | Rent of plots.                                      | 27711.25 | 28059.25 |
| 6.    | Miscellaneous                                       | 206.00   | 501.55   |
| 7.    | Mela fees.  | —        | —        |
| 8.    | Rest-house rent.                                    | —        | —        |
| 9.    | Teh bazari.   | —        | —        |
| 10.   | Govt. grants.                                       | 1000.00  | 1000.00  |

| 1961-62  | 1962-63  | 1963-64  | 1964-65  |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 5        | 6        | 7        | 8        |
| 64.00    | 68.00    | 80.00    | 90.00    |
| 3925.00  | 3682.00  | 3742.50  | 4200.00  |
| 187.00   | 282.00   | 222.00   | 249.50   |
| 200.00   | 200.00   | 200.00   | 200.00   |
| 28625.50 | 23047.25 | 26064.50 | 26189.25 |
| 774.22   | 1464.74  | 644.07   | 558.00   |
| —        | —        | —        | —        |
| —        | —        | —        | —        |
| —        | —        | —        | —        |
| —        | 11610.00 | —        | 2240.00  |

| S.No. | 1965-66  | 1966-67  | 1967-68  | 1968-69  |
|-------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 9     | 10       | 11       | 12       | 13       |
| 1.    | 90.00    | 73.00    | 73.00    | 73.00    |
| 2.    | 4384.62  | 5068.75  | 5865.25  | 6600.00  |
| 3.    |          |          |          |          |
|       | 285.00   | 260.00   | 226.00   | 299.00   |
| 4.    |          |          |          |          |
|       | 200.00   | 200.00   | 200.00   | 200.00   |
| 5.    | 30722.75 | 27232.00 | 26399.75 | 28213.75 |
| 6.    | 869.00   | 1047.50  | 873.50   | 938.10   |
| 7.    | —        | —        | —        | —        |
| 8.    | —        | —        | —        | —        |
| 9.    | —        | —        | —        | —        |
| 10.   | 11840.00 | 9197.00  | 4340.00  | —        |

| 1969-70  | 1970-71     | 1971-72  | 1972-73  |
|----------|-------------|----------|----------|
| 13       | 14          | 15       | 16       |
| 73.00    | (Abolished) |          |          |
| 9250.00  | 10025.00    | 9950.00  | 9375.00  |
| 301.03   | 433.00      | 289.00   | 312.00   |
| 200.00   | 200.00      | 200.00   | 200.00   |
| 37018.75 | 42862.50    | 53946.25 | 54122.50 |
| 923.10   | 793.91      | 2832.08  | 3061.58  |
| —        | 21700.00    | 25623.50 | 35503.00 |
| —        | —           | 46.00    | 79.09    |
| —        | —           | 240.00   | 173.00   |
| 3500.00  | 672.35      | 42480.00 | 13000.00 |

## Expenditure (in rupees)

| S. No. | Head of Account             | 1950-60  | 1960-61 |
|--------|-----------------------------|----------|---------|
| 1      | 2                           | 3        | 4       |
| 1.     | General Department.         | 3096.76  | 3237.85 |
| 2.     | Conservancy and sanitation. | 3805.62  | 4107.50 |
| 3.     | Water supply.               | 19000.00 | —       |
| 4.     | Medical.                    | 376.03   | 625.33  |
| 5.     | Education.                  | —        | —       |
| 6.     | Garden and road side trees. | 737.10   | 802.97  |
| 7.     | Aid to temple committee.    | 5000.00  | 5000.00 |
| 8.     | Municipal work.             | 230.00   | 449.00  |
| 9.     | Street lighting.            | 1300.00  | 1300.00 |
| 10.    | Miscellaneous               | —        | —       |
| 11.    | Mela fees.                  | —        | —       |

| 1961-62 | 1962-63  | 1963-64 | 1964-65 |
|---------|----------|---------|---------|
| 5       | 6        | 7       | 8       |
| 3494.60 | 2693.10  | 7309.51 | 4570.83 |
| 4440.64 | 8181.34  | 4634.64 | 6148.11 |
| 2000.00 | 1500.00  | 3041.88 | 7376.15 |
| 833.91  | 912.25   | 866.72  | 913.82  |
| —       | —        | —       | —       |
| 750.25  | 6363.01  | 754.64  | 926.45  |
| 5000.00 | —        | —       | —       |
| 7197.85 | 11587.18 | 8195.09 | 5019.29 |
| 540.00  | 300.00   | 3300.00 | 5936.89 |
| —       | 5761.00  | 75.00   | —       |
| —       | —        | —       | —       |

| S. No. | 1965-66  | 1966-67  | 1967-68  | 1968-69  |
|--------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
|        | 9        | 10       | 11       | 12       |
| 1.     | 4169.33  | 10245.42 | 8082.99  | 8376.61  |
| 2.     | 6564.00  | 26183.45 | 10468.22 | 13446.11 |
| 3.     | 8000.000 | 29000.00 | 26694.00 | 13000.00 |
| 4.     | 860.51   | —        | —        | —        |
| 5.     | —        | —        | —        | —        |
| 6.     | 1010.24  | 1194.51  | 1586.49  | 1633.62  |
| 7.     | —        | —        | —        | —        |
| 8.     | 5029.40  | 4632.47  | 6343.23  | 8719.55  |
| 9.     | 1497.68  | 2149.69  | 8595.58  | 4238.76  |
| 10.    | —        | —        | —        | —        |
| 11.    | —        | —        | —        | —        |



| 1969-70  | 1970-71  | 1971-72  | 1972-73  |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 13       | 14       | 15       | 16       |
| 10079.87 | 29964.00 | 18404.67 | 16335.17 |
| 1660.07  | 20687.21 | 77865.93 | 16007.87 |
| 22242.43 | 26332.35 | 28073.23 | 33768.00 |
| —        | —        | —        | —        |
| —        | —        | 880.15   | —        |
| 1824.90  | 1787.24  | 2972.63  | 2572.42  |
| —        | —        | —        | —        |
| 5980.04  | 1935.72  | 5451.18  | 1769.10  |
| 4757.52  | 5696.55  | 4375.12  | 4975.90  |
| —        | —        | 2100.00  | —        |
| —        | 4011.63  | 6104.25  | —        |

**Notified Area Committee Ghamarwin :** From the point of view of means of communication the place is well connected with **district head-quarters** and lies at a **distance of 32 km from there**. On demand from the people of the area and to develop the place on proper lines, this area was declared as Notified Area vide Government notification No. 7-27/69-LSG, dated the 27th October, 1970 by amalgamating the areas of nine villages namely Ghamarwin, Panol, Kalyana, Tikri, Dakri, Barota, Loharwin, Baddo and Ratehal. Out of these the areas of Ghamarwin Kalyana and Tikri villages were taken entirely and of the remaining villages partially. Now the whole notified area has been divided into nine wards. According to the census of 1971 the population of notified area is 1,967 and the number of houses in it is about 250. The area of the committee is 2.89 sq km. To administer its affairs a committee consisting of seven members, three official and four non-official, was constituted. The Tahsildar, Ghamarwin, was nominated as President of the committee. In June, 1974 the strength of members was raised to nine by including two more official members and in place of the Tahsildar, the Sub-Divisional Officer (Cvil) Ghamarwin, was nominated as President. Two officials of the Sub-Divisional Officer's office have been entrusted with the part-time jobs of Secretary and clerk. No other staff has been provided so far.

**Financial resources :** Due to non-finalisation of the bye-laws, the committee has not been able to create its funds and is entirely dependent on grant-in-aid from the Government. During the years 1971-72, 1972-73 and 1973-74 the Government grants-in-aid amounted to Rs. 39,921, 11,787 and 18,500 respectively and these amounts were spent on the developmental work of the area, viz. construction of a park, crematorium, street urinals, latrines and instalation of street light. During the year 1974-75 the committee created few funds from licence fees, miscellaneous receipts, hawker fees etc.

### **Town planning and public health**

The district has the singular fortune of having an entirely new township, planned on the latest fashion and style. But function of town planning is not under the local body and the constructions are undertaken by the State Government. Adequate arrangements for water supply, sanitation and electricity are however made by the committee which has also constructed two municipal parks.

### **PANCHAYATS**

The erstwhile Bilaspur State maintained a systematised panchayat organisation during the regime of rulers. In 1903 Raja Bijai Chand formed

*quami* panchayats (sect panchayats) i.e. Brahman panchayats, Thakur panchayats and Rajput panchayats to have social reforms and to solve social problems of the sects and, reforms on the basis of religious principles in each caste. In 1940 a further step was taken to establish, by virtue of an Act, a Central Education and Health Committee (panchayat) to control education and health in the rural areas.

*Halqa* Councils were also formed at patwar circle level. Both the Pargana Committee and *Halqa* Councils were constituted under the Act framed by the ruler. The *Halqa* Councils consisted of a *pradhan*, *up-pradhan*, a Secretary and a member elected by one hundred families of the circle by rotation twice a year. These councils had both executive and judicial powers. On the executive side a council was empowered to issue directions to its workers to safeguard public rights, to start schools, libraries, technical institutions, to dig and maintain irrigation *kuhls*, tanks and wells, to assist the public in the procurement of good seed and improved agricultural tools and implements, to manage local fairs, to help the poor, sick and disabled persons, to supply recruits to the Indian Army, to look after the families of Indian soldiers, to develop co-operative movement, to render assistance in the development of the local business and enforcement of price control, to look after the beneficiary institutions, to collect fines and help their realisation, to render assistance in the development of roads and communication and to look after Government forests. On the judiciary side these councils were empowered to entertain and decide criminal cases under section 379 I. P. C., provided the value did not exceed Rs. 50/-, section 353 I. P. C., section 358 I. P. C., section 247 I. P. C., offences under *Bilaspur State Primary Education Vidhan, 1999 Bikrami (1942)*, and offences under section 24 and 26 of the *Cattle Trespass Act, 1871*. On the civil side they could hear a suit up to Rs. 250/-, applications under section 17 and 19 of the *Punjab Tenancy Act of 1887* and under section 97 of the *Punjab Land Revenue Act, 1887*. Every *Halqa* Council was to form one team consisting of three members, to decide cases within its jurisdiction and the bench was formed by rotation for six months, under approval of the State.

The councils at *Halqa* level and committees at pargana level functioned for a year only, and, thereafter the *Punjab Panchayat Act, 1939* was extended to Bilaspur State in 1950 and judicial panchayats were formed in each patwar circle in March 1951 which continued to function till 1954 when Bilaspur State was merged with Himachal Pradesh and the *Punjab Panchayat Act, 1939* was replaced by the *Himachal Pradesh Panchayati Raj Act, 1952*. The latter Act was also replaced by the *Himachal Pradesh Panchayati Raj Act, 1968*. Under the *Panchayati Raj Act, 1952* four gram panchayats were constituted in the year 1955-56. This number was

increased manifold and in 1962 there were sixty-seven panchayats. All the panchayats and other relative bodies were organised and shaped in conformity with the new Act. The *Himachal Pradesh Panchayat Rules, 1971* made under the Act embodied all the procedural formalities and accordingly 81 Gram Panchayat circles were carved out in the district keeping in view the population criteria. The Annexure to this chapter shows the names of all the panchayats of the district. The *gram sabha* was split up into wards and election to these rural bodies were held at the fag end of the year 1972. The election system was based on adult franchise by secret ballot.

Every person who is qualified to be the member of the State Legislative Assembly was eligible to contest the election for the office of the *panch*. If women and scheduled castes remained unrepresented then one and two respectively were to be co-opted as members. After the conclusion of the election and before entering the duties, the *panches* were administered the oath of allegiance to the Constitution of India. Subsequently, Presidents and Vice-Presidents were elected by secret ballot by the elected members. When the office of the President falls vacant, the Vice-President exercises the powers of the President, until the new President is elected. The meeting of the Gram Panchayat is held at least once a month and special meeting can be convened by the majority of the *panches* within three days, failing which these *panches*, with the previous approval of the prescribed authority, are entitled to call a meeting after giving a week's notice to the *pradhan* and the other *panches*. One-third of the members of the panchayat form a quorum. The decisions of the panchayat are made by majority and in case of a tie the *pradhan* or in his absence the *up-pradhan* has an additional or casting vote.

Every Gram Panchayat is provided with a paid and whole-time Secretary to maintain its records. The Secretaries are given intensive training on various subjects connected with their duties.

**Panchayat samitis :** There are three panchayat (block) *samitis* in the district namely, Sadar, Gherwin and Ghamarwin. These bodies have come into existence since July, 1974 with the election of the primary members of the *samitis*. These panchayat *samitis* are constituted under the Act of 1968 for every block. Each panchayat *samiti* consists of twenty members elected by the *pradhans*, *up-pradhans* and *panches* of Gram Panchayats from among themselves and two leading female social workers are co-opted. If the scheduled castes are not represented then four persons are co-opted to the *samiti*. The co-operative societies within the jurisdiction of the panchayat *samiti* also elect two members of such societies for the purpose. Every elected member of the Himachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly representing the area covered by the block is not entitled to vote but has the right to

address, and otherwise take part, in the proceedings of any meeting of the panchayat *samiti* or the sub-committee. The Sub Divisional Officer, having jurisdiction in the block, is the *ex-officio* member of the *samiti*. The *ex-officio* member is not entitled to vote at any meeting of the *samiti*. The term of office of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the panchayat *samiti* is five years.

A panchayat *samiti* ordinarily meets at least six times in each year but not more than two months is allowed to elapse between any two successive meetings.

**Zila Parishad :** There shall be constituted a *Zila Parishad* for every district comprising one elected representative of every panchayat *samiti* in the district. The Chairman of every panchayat *samiti*, every member of the *Lok Sabha* and every elected member of the Himachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly representing the constituencies falling within the district, every member of the *Rajya Sabha*, the Deputy Commissioner of the district, two women interested in social work, two persons belonging to scheduled castes shall be co-opted members of the *Zila Parishad*. The *Zila Parishad* shall meet as often as may be necessary, but not more than three months shall be allowed to elapse between its two successive meetings. One-third of the members of a *Zila Parishad* actually serving for the time being shall form a quorum at the meeting of the *parishad*. This body is yet to be formed.

**Nyaya Panchayats :** Every *Gram Panchayat* elects a Judicial Committee known as *nyaya panchayat*. The number of *nyaya panches*, including the *sarpanch* and *naib-sarpanch* is between five and seven according to the size of the panchayat circle. The term of office of every *nyaya panch* is five years.

**Samjhauta Samitis :** The *Himachal Pradesh Panchayati Raj Act, 1952* provided for the establishment of a conciliation board or *samjhauta samiti* in each *gram sabha*. This body used to be constituted by the President of the *Gram Panchayat*, and comprised not more than five and not less than three members including the President of the *Gram Panchayat*, to conciliate petty cases through amicable settlements between the parties. The Conciliation Board offered opportunity to the parties concerned to make amicable settlements of their disputes. These *samjhauta samitis* came to close on the introduction of the *Panchayati Raj Act, 1968*.

**Panchayat Sammelans :** With the object of educating the members of panchayats, and to enable to widen their outlook and experience for carrying out their duties efficiently, they were required to assemble and exchange their views. The assemblage was called panchayat *sammelan*.

These *sammelans* provided an opportunity to the office-bearers to meet at a place and discuss their difficulties and problems and to find solutions thereof by exchange of their views. Eight panchayat *sammelans* at the tahsil level and two at the district level were conducted during the Second Five Year Plan. These panchayat *sammelans* also came to close in 1962.

**Financial resources :** The financial resources of the panchayats by and large, depend upon the economic condition of rural population. In Bilaspur district the people are generally poor and the panchayats cannot have free recourse to heavy taxations. In order to strengthen the financial resources the Government, in 1971-72, decided to divert 20 per cent of the land-revenue to these local self units.

To extend financial help to panchayats, in their initial stages, the Government has given them various grants-in-aid to meet their establishment charges and to undertake various development activities. The sub-joined statement will show the amounts of various grants-in-aid given to the panchayats from time to time under both plan and non-plan heads.

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**STATEMENT OF GRANTS-IN-AID TO PANCHAYATS**  
**(1956-57 to 1973-74)**

---

| Sl. No.  | Name of the scheme                           | 1953-54     | 1954-55 |
|----------|--|-------------|---------|
| 1        | 2  | 3           | 4       |
|          |  | (in rupees) |         |
| NON PLAN |  |             |         |
| 1.       | In lieu of collection of fee-fines.          | —           | —       |
| 2.       | In lieu of collection of local rate.         | —           | —       |
| 3.       | Purchase of furniture and books.             | —           | 3,200   |
| 4.       | <i>Chowkidara</i> agency.                    | 2,000       | —       |
| 5.       | Sports goods.                                | —           | 4,400   |
| 6.       | Pay of panchayat clerks.                     | —           | 9,600   |
| 7.       | Land-revenue on <i>muafis</i> & jagirs.      | —           | —       |
| 8.       | Land-revenue.                                | —           | —       |
| PLAN     |  |             |         |
| 1.       | Purchase of library books.                   | —           | —       |
| 2.       | <i>Ayurvedic</i> dispensaries.               | —           | —       |
| 3.       | Prizes and rewards.                          | —           | —       |
| 4.       | Establishment of club and parks.             | —           | —       |
| 5.       | Supply of tools and implements.              | —           | —       |
| 6.       | Training of personnel.                       | —           | —       |
| 7.       | Construction of panchayat <i>ghars</i> .     | —           | —       |
| 8.       | Organisation of panchayat <i>sammelans</i> . | —           | —       |
| 9.       | Purchase of stationery to panchayats.        | —           | —       |
| 0.       | Pay of panchayats secretaries.               | —           | —       |
| 11.      | Printing of pamphlets.                       | —           | —       |
| 12.      | <i>Zila</i> panchayats.                      | —           | —       |
| 13.      | Orchards.                                    | —           | —       |



| 1955-56     | 1956-57 | 1957-58 | 1958-59 | 1959-60   | 1960-61   |
|-------------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|-----------|
| 5           | 6       | 7       | 8       | 9         | 10        |
| (in rupees) |         |         |         |           |           |
| 2,368       | 5,500   | —       | —       | —         | —         |
| 6,040       | 3,993   | 39,300  | 19,611  | 37,189.40 | 36,923.55 |
| —           | —       | —       | —       | —         | —         |
| —           | —       | 1,370   | —       | 7,200     | 7,200     |
| —           | —       | —       | —       | —         | —         |
| —           | —       | —       | —       | —         | —         |
| —           | —       | —       | —       | —         | —         |
| —           | —       | —       | —       | —         | —         |
| —           | 11,880  | —       | —       | —         | —         |
| 6,600       | —       | —       | —       | —         | —         |
| —           | —       | —       | —       | —         | —         |
| —           | —       | —       | —       | —         | —         |
| 26,400      | 8,00    | —       | —       | —         | —         |
| —           | —       | 1,117   | —       | 2,720     | 2,400     |
| —           | —       | 20,000  | —       | 10,000    | 15,000    |
| —           | —       | 960     | —       | —         | —         |
| —           | —       | 1,720   | 1,600   | 1,200     | —         |
| 14,400      | —       | 20,970  | 24,000  | 800       | 800       |
| —           | —       | 800     | 1,085   | 24,000    | 23,820    |
| —           | —       | 3,600   | —       | —         | —         |
| —           | —       | —       | —       | —         | —         |

|             | 1961-62   | 1962-63 | 1963-64 | 1964-65 | 1965-66 | 1966-67 |
|-------------|-----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
|             | 11        | 12      | 13      | 14      | 15      | 16      |
| (in rupees) |           |         |         |         |         |         |
| 1.          | 1,564.64  | 2,529   | 1,482   | 2,011   | 1,342   | 1,389   |
| 2.          | 36,466.99 | 50,442  | 36,464  | 36,540  | 54,004  | 36,621  |
| 3.          | —         | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| 4.          | 7,200     | 8,631   | 12,060  | 12,060  | 12,060  | 12,060  |
| 5.          | —         | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| 6.          | 24,000    | —       | —       | 32,026  | 33,944  | 59,719  |
| 7.          | —         | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| 8.          | —         | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| 1.          | —         | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| 2.          | —         | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| 3.          | —         | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| 4.          | —         | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| 5.          | 4,520     | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| 6.          | 10,000    | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| 7.          | —         | 10,000  | 500     | 21,400  | 24,000  | —       |
| 8.          | —         | 36,766  | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| 9.          | —         | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| 10.         | —         | 6,480   | 30,880  | 20,653  | 22,159  | —       |
| 11.         | —         | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| 12.         | —         | —       | —       | —       | —       | —       |
| 13.         | —         | —       | —       | 20,000  | 5,000   | 10,590  |

## LOCAL SELF GOVERNMENT

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| 1967-68     | 1968-69 | 1969-70 | 1970-71 | 1971-72  | 1972-73  |
|-------------|---------|---------|---------|----------|----------|
| 17          | 18      | 19      | 20      | 21       | 22       |
| (in rupees) |         |         |         |          |          |
| 1,609       | 1,984   | 1,907   | 1,779   | 1,369    | 1,584    |
| 36,716      | 36,745  | 36,891  | 36,885  | 37,040   | 37,067   |
| —           | —       | —       | —       | —        | —        |
| 12,060      | 12,195  | 11,849  | 12,240  | 36,720   | 18,000   |
| —           | —       | —       | —       | —        | —        |
| 61,451      | 63,608  | 60,832  | 63,031  | 1,21,763 | 1,17,184 |
| —           | —       | —       | —       | 4,811    | 4,791    |
| —           | —       | —       | —       | 32,691   | 32,508   |
| —           | —       | —       | —       | —        | —        |
| —           | —       | —       | —       | —        | —        |
| —           | —       | —       | —       | —        | —        |
| —           | —       | —       | —       | —        | —        |
| —           | —       | —       | —       | —        | —        |
| —           | —       | —       | —       | —        | —        |
| —           | —       | —       | —       | —        | —        |
| —           | —       | —       | —       | —        | —        |
| —           | —       | —       | —       | —        | —        |
| —           | —       | —       | —       | —        | —        |
| —           | —       | —       | —       | —        | —        |
| —           | —       | —       | —       | —        | —        |
| 25,850      | —       | —       | —       | —        | —        |

**Special achievements of nyaya panchayats**

As many as sixty-eight *nyaya* panchayats are functioning in the district. An idea of the working of *nyaya* panchayats for the last four years may be had from the following table showing number of cases handled and disposed of by them.

| Particulars                                    | 1967-68 |          |         | 1968-69 |          |
|--|---------|----------|---------|---------|----------|
|  | Civil   | Criminal | Revenue | Civil   | Criminal |
| 1  | 2       | 3        | 4       | 5       | 6        |
| 1. Cases pending at the beginning of the year. | 66      | 359      | 198     | 83      | 279      |
| 2. Cases filed.                                | 439     | 572      | 435     | 392     | 540      |
| 3. Cases transferred.                          | —       | —        | —       | —       | —        |
| 4. Total.                                      | 505     | 931      | 633     | 475     | 819      |
| 5. Cases disposed of.                          | 160     | 222      | 253     | 199     | 385      |
| 6. Cases un-compromised.                       | 102     | 208      | —       | 168     | 196      |
| 7. Balance.                                    | 243     | 501      | 380     | 108     | 265      |

| Revenue | 1969-70 |          |         | 1970-71 |          |         |
|---------|---------|----------|---------|---------|----------|---------|
|         | Civil   | Criminal | Revenue | Civil   | Criminal | Revenue |
| 7       | 8       | 9        | 10      | 11      | 12       | 13      |
| 172     | 107     | 265      | 61      | 623     | 1964     | 847     |
| 348     | 401     | 629      | 532     | 430     | 505      | 494     |
| —       | —       | —        | —       | —       | —        | —       |
| 520     | 508     | 894      | 593     | 1053    | 2199     | 1341    |
| —       | 212     | 391      | —       | 373     | 526      | 405     |
| —       | 124     | 291      | 379     | —       | —        | —       |
| 61      | 172     | 212      | 214     | 680     | 1673     | 936     |

### Social and economic reforms

The aims of the *Panchayati Raj*, amongst others, are to pursue an all sided development and thereby to enrich the life of the people, by taking various measures as far as their financial and other resources permit. Besides undertaking development activities, with the help of the Government and with their own resources in the form of *shramdan*, panchayats have helped to better the social status of untouchables in their areas. To encourage social gatherings between Harijans and others a community *lunch* was organised at Hatwar on May 25, 1962. Hatwar *Gram* Panchayat situated in tahsil Ghamarwin has a population of 4,583 (1961 census figures) out of which about twenty-five per cent are Harijans. This *Gram* Panchayat was awarded first prize of rupees four hundred for doing best work for the removal of untouchability during 1961-62. All temples, drinking water sources and other public places have been thrown open to Harijans and no discrimination is practised. Through their meetings, *sammelans* and special drives on particular occasions like untouchability weeks, panchayats have made appreciable efforts to foster a sense of equality among all sections of the people.

The panchayats in Bilaspur have also been taking quite an active part in the celebration of occasions of national importance in the organisation of campaigns and drives for the stepping up of food production and in the mass plantations during *Van Mahotsavas*.

**Defence efforts :** The Bilaspur panchayats have been confronted with a new problem of defence through development, as elsewhere. Realising their responsibilities these bodies have made their contributions to the national defence and development efforts. These have been busy during the war and thereafter in raising public contribution for National Defence Fund, keeping the people in touch with the latest developments in the country and keeping their morale high ; keeping strict watch over the rumour-mongers and the mischievous elements ; establishing village volunteer force for the purpose of civil defence i.e.; for watch and ward, for maintenance of law and order, for helping the needy, for taking precautionary measure against air-raids, fire etc., increasing agricultural production, enthusing people to join Army, police, homeguards and other organisations, and inducing people to donate blood.

## ANNEXURE

## Names of the gram panchayats of the district

| Name of Block | Names of <i>Gram</i> Panchayats |                        |
|---------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| Sadar.        | 1. Lakhanpur.                   | 16. Chhakoh.           |
|               | 2. Nowa.                        | 17. Panjail Khurd      |
|               | 3. Chandpur.                    | (Dhuni Panjail).       |
|               | 4. Oel.                         | 18. Jukhala.           |
|               | 5. Deoli.                       | 19. Kotla.             |
|               | 6. Bandla.                      | 20. Namol.             |
|               | 7. Makri (Markand).             | 21. Tali (Zakatkhana). |
|               | 8. Dhartatoh.                   | 22. Kuthera.           |
|               | 9. Dhonkothi.                   | 23. Behal.             |
|               | 10. Panjgain.                   | 24. Swahn.             |
|               | 11. Bhatar Nichli.              | 25. Dahatmajri.        |
|               | 12. Deoth.                      | 26. Dharot.            |
|               | 13. Chharol.                    | 27. Nakrana.           |
|               | 14. Rani Kotla.                 | 28. Bhakra.            |
|               | 15. Suin Sarwaha.               | 29. Tarsu.             |
| Gherwin.      | 1. Brahmnikalan.                | 14. Badol.             |
|               | 2. Changar Talai.               | 15. Behnajattan.       |
|               | 3. Ghandeer.                    | 16. Jhandutta.         |
|               | 4. Kalol.                       | 17. Behna Brahmana.    |
|               | 5. Sanihra.                     | 18. Auar.              |
|               | 6. Gharahan.                    | 19. Bakroa.            |
|               | 7. Salwar.                      | 20. Barthin.           |
|               | 8. Dhanni.                      | 21. Badgaon.           |
|               | 9. Paploa.                      | 22. Baloh.             |
|               | 10. Nakhlehra.                  | 23. Chhat.             |
|               | 11. Dahad.                      | 24. Karloti.           |
|               | 12. Gherwin.                    | 25. Paplah.            |
|               | 13. Samoh.                      |                        |

- |           |                 |                          |
|-----------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Ghamarwin | 1. Gahar.       | 15. Talwara.             |
|           | 2. Padyalag.    | 16. Sue.                 |
|           | 3. Dangar.      | 17. Patta.               |
|           | 4. Bhupral.     | 18. Ghamarwin.           |
|           | 5. Lahri Sarel. | 19. Lubarwin.            |
|           | 6. Barota.      | 20. Malayawar.           |
|           | 7. Ghandalwin.  | 21. Nanawan.             |
|           | 8. Panditehra.  | 22. Rohin.               |
|           | 9. Morsinghi.   | 23. Harlog.              |
|           | 10. Dabhla.     | 24. Majhwar (Kuhmajhwar) |
|           | 11. Kothi.      | 25. Hawan.               |
|           | 12. Marhana.    | 26. Talyana.             |
|           | 13. Kot.        | 27. Mehri Kathla.        |
|           | 14. Hatwar.     |                          |
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# Chapter XV

## EDUCATION AND CULTURE

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Even the local lore, not to speak of the local history, does not offer any clue to show what was, if at all there was any, the system of education in the area now forming the district. Not a vestige of previous record regarding the manner and method of education has been traced. At best it is conjectured that in the ancient times education was imparted at various temples and *ashrams* of great rishis like Vyas and Markandeya. It may be admitted, although not without doubt, that well-to-do people belonging to Brahman, Rajput and Vaish communities did get some sort of education either in their homes or in the temples. In the absence of any concrete and direct evidence about the existence of any scholar or scholarly work produced by the area it becomes inevitable to conclude that the education would not have been the object of ardent desire of the bulk of the population.

One palpable reason for such a state of affairs, as the political history of the tract would seem to suggest, would have been perpetual warfare in the area claiming major part of attention of the rulers and the ruled, and, leaving little leisure for the pursuits of education and art. As the learning was not exploited as a sure means of earning the bread the general people might not have felt the necessity and directed their attention to secure and spread education on any appreciable scale. The procedure involved in the maintenance of administration was so simple and short as would obviate the necessity of services of learned and educated persons in the royal courts. This held the demand for educated persons at its lowest. These and other allied factors had the singular impact of non spread of literacy and education in the current sense of the terms. Such conditions continued to hold their sway till much after the subjugation of the area by the British Government.

By 1910 there were four schools in the erstwhile Bilaspur State with a total number of three hundred and fifty-four students on roll. The one at Bilaspur proper was subsequently raised to the status of Anglo-vernacular middle school, and a Vedic *pathshala* was opened there. Primary schools were also opened each at Ghamarwin, and Attapur Bhakra. The average attendance in the middle school was one hundred and twenty-seven, in the *pathshala* forty-seven and in the primary schools ninety each. The Anglo-vernacular school at the headquarters was upgraded to high school in 1313-14. By 1933,

the number of students in the high school had gone up to eight hundred-and-twenty but there were hardly any additions to the primary institutions in the villages.

The State still provided very inadequate facilities by way of education. The high school was staffed mostly by about half a dozen untrained teachers unacquainted with any but the traditional methods. Primary schools located without an eye to the geographical peculiarities of the area were the only means of academic education. For girls even these primitive instruments of instructions did not exist. Nevertheless the then administration had, it appears, started to realise the need of education and spread of literacy.

The first task of the administration, therefore, was to define its educational policy. In British India, at least seemingly better attention was being focussed on the education of the masses at that time. Full notice was taken of contemporary currents of thought and ultimately it was resolved to aim at professional self-sufficiency, economic well-being and the cultivation of a civic sense. Scanty means of communication with even the adjoining area of the British Punjab made the importing of professional men both difficult and expensive. The then princely regime entertained the view that a purely academic education would be a waste of the frugal resources of an impoverished people.

Raja Anand Chand issued an appeal to people and servants alike inviting public attention toward a solution of problems of education. A committee was set up to survey urgent requirements in this field and to point out the extent of effort needed for their fulfilment. This laid the basis of the Central and Pargana Education Committees. The committee submitted a comprehensive report.

They recommended the institution of a Syllabus Committee to formulate a comprehensive scheme of studies with expert consultation. In the meanwhile an Inspector of Rural Education had been appointed. He was instructed to go round the area, to inspect its then existing Government and private schools, to study the educational problems confronting it and to make detailed recommendations on the subject. This report was also in the hands of the raja by the time the committee's findings reached him.

Thereupon a Syllabus Committee, with the Revenue and Judicial Secretary as Chairman, and a number of high school teachers, and executive officials as members came to be appointed. It followed in the main, the basic plan of education affording a co-ordination of economic factors with modern educational requirements. Hindi had been adopted as the medium

of instruction and agriculture as the basic craft. The principle of free and compulsory education for all had been adopted without giving it legislative sanction, as it was felt that in the rural community it would be premature to legislate on the subject.

In 1933 there was only one Government primary school in the State at Bhakra. The other two primary schools were run by private contributions. The number of children receiving tuition in all educational institutions of the State was three hundred. In all there were three elementary schools, with four classes, against twenty-eight (with a five-year planned course of study) in 1942, all financed by the State.

There were only three teachers working in primary schools, including private schools, as against forty, all of them properly trained. Special provision had been made for the education of girls and adults. All primary schools in the mofussil were co-educational institutions where special arrangements existed for the training of girls in basic crafts to them. At the centre a full fledged girls' school planned to develop up to the high school standard had reached the sixth. It had been housed in a special building of its own with ample grounds and residential quarters for teachers.

Education and literacy of adults was controlled by a special section of the Department of Education. In order to consolidate the advance made in this respect village libraries were established at all primary school centres to which copies of a weekly paper published in Hindi from the centre were supplied free.

During the period between 1932-42 a number of candidates received police and teacher's training outside the State. At the end of 1942 a student was receiving training at the Hewat School of Engineering at Lucknow, two were prosecuting their studies in the Forman Christian College, Lahore, two in the Law College, Lahore, three in the Medical College, Amritsar and one in the Heiley College of Commerce, Lahore. Their total expenses including boarding and lodging were met by the State.

The administration of education in the State was controlled by two departments. The high school and the girls' school, in Bilaspur, were placed under their own heads who received such guidance as they needed from the raja who had kept himself in constant touch with these institutions since their reorganisation. The Department of Rural Education was administered by a Secretary assisted by two Inspectors with headquarters at Ghamarwin and Bilaspur. Monthly and seasonal reports were submitted by them which after consideration by the Secretary were discussed with the raja to ensure proper carrying out of the educational programme that had been accepted as the education policy of the State. The Secretary for Education in addition to

administrative and supervisory work, looked after the Central Model Primary School, responsible for the children's annual camp at the headquarters, for the organisation of training, refresher courses for teachers and for the publication of text books for children and handbooks for teachers. He also directed adult education and national war front activities in the State.

The Secretary for Education and the Inspector of rural primary schools were assisted by local Education Pargana Committee under a Central Committee, which laid down the general lines of work for the Pargana Committees. The Pargana Committees were especially charged with the responsibility of construction and attendance of children and such other matters as called for public co-operation.

The problem of housing and training of teachers, both normally heavy items of expenditure, were solved more or less economically.

Attached to each school was a plot of land in area extending from one to two acres. It had been divided into three parts, the courtyard of the school, the playing ground and the agricultural plot. In the last mentioned piece, floriculture, gardening and agriculture was practised and demonstrated. Regular accounts of the out-put were maintained, but the proceeds were allowed to be appropriated by the teachers as an incentive to concentrated effort. Agriculture and gardening formed the basic crafts.

Handloom weaving was introduced in the primary school, Bilaspur during the year 1942. A whole time weaving master had been appointed to train and guide them. Particularly in the rural schools the children had prepared their own mats of the palm leaves to lay on their school floor. They also made mats of leaves of the maize plant and of sugarcane stalks. Such crafts as rope making by girls, clay modelling and toy making by all had also been introduced. In the school, arts and crafts section held annual exhibition and displayed a variety of products of juvenile manufacture. Prizes for best workmanship were won by schools.

As similar methods could not be adopted for the girls school at the centre, women teachers had to be imported and arrangements started to get some State subjects trained in a School in Punjab as soon as they had obtained the requisite pre-training qualifications.

The high school was re-organised to combine essential education for citizenship with the routine matriculation examination needs of the university. On the language side English and Hindi received special emphasis to supply the needs of the State to have its administrative officers; geography was stressed with the help of the latest apparatus. The study of

physical science was compulsory for all students and special laboratory equipment was provided. A museum and a well-equipped library were maintained to help both the teacher and the taught. Compulsory games after school hour had been introduced under the supervision of class masters.

The raja stressed the desirability of adult literacy and the State adult literacy centres had been started and were working satisfactorily in almost all major villages. Special efforts were made to educate a larger number of workers from the State who migrated during summer months to Simla as rickshaw men. Teachers were sent from Bilaspur to give these rickshaw men not only the rudiments of education but also to inculcate in them the habits of thrift and good living.

In 1940 a number of selected children from each school were invited to encamp at the headquarters in order to be able to take part in the annual sports competition to enjoy the fair and to benefit from the educational exhibition. They also brought sample craft products from their respective schools. The camp having proved a great success, it was extended the following year. It included children of all classes from class II upwards and lasted for a fortnight. This annual fair was then an established institution. In 1942 a considerable number of girls also attended. Apart from the educative value of these camps, advantage was taken of the assembly of children to hold annual sports tournaments; to hold annual examination of all primary classes from II to V according to one uniform standard; to afford an opportunity to the raja to observe for himself the success or otherwise of the entire educational programme.

After consulting eminent educationists of the Punjab, the Uttar Pradesh (the then United Provinces) and Bombay on the subject, a detailed plan of procedure was drawn out. Ram Chand Verma, the only surviving Editor of *Hindi shabd sagar* published by the Nagari Pracharani Sabha, was requested to compile a list of words in Hindi keeping in view the accepted principles of frequency and utility. After mutual discussion a word-list called the *Anand shabdavali* was published in 1940 and was favourably reviewed by several Hindi authors and journals. In the first instance the subject matter of the book was contributed by several educationists and experts in their own branches of learning at the Universities of Allahabad, Varanasi, Aligarh and Punjab.

All these experiments were directed towards one end namely educating the present generation in such a manner as to make the task of educating the coming generation of men and women in the State easy, happy and economically a productive task.

The educational re-organisation of the whole State thus taken up in hand in 1938-39 provided good results and by 1944 the number of elementary schools had risen to twenty-eight with one girls middle school, and, a senior basic school at Bilaspur proper. The total number of children who received education at these institutions was about four thousand.

In spite of all these efforts much progress would not seem to have been made because expansion in education by 1947 was regarded a recent and new phenomenon. A single high school at the centre fed by half a dozen teachers, ill attended primary schools formed the educational system. There had, no doubt, been a revolution in education in the State but time was required to build up an educated society. All those who had passed out of the high school had been absorbed in the administration which was still starving for lack of educated staff. Half a dozen unemployed matriculates inside or outside the State were ex-servants of the Government. University education was being imparted at State expenses as an essential training for administrative efficiency.

Many a project was awaiting execution for dearth of local trained staff. Demand for technical personnel was unlimited, even if a few could be spared, they would be too young to command experience and understanding for running technical institutions.

According to the erstwhile Bilaspur State version, after some time the high school at Bilaspur was raised to the status of an intermediate college and the girls middle school became a high school. In 1951 there were twenty-nine primary schools, eight secondary schools and two high schools. This number rose, by 1954 to two high schools, eighteen middle schools and about forty elementary schools in the villages with about six thousand pupils under instruction. There was also a teachers training school at Aur alongwith a Janta College started in 1953. The teachers training school and Janta College were subsequently closed.

It is interesting to note that the then Bilaspur State had formulated a Ten Year Plan which embodied ambitious schemes for the development of education. There is no proof to suggest that the plan, especially in regard to educational development, was ever put to execution with any tangible results and achievements. Nevertheless, Bilaspur lost its political entity as a part 'C' State in 1954 and the educational institutions that were inherited as a legacy by the Himachal Pradesh Administration comprised the set of about sixty educational institutions mentioned in the preceding paragraph.

## LITERACY AND EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS

The following is the epitomized statistical position revealing the state of growth of literacy and education in the district.

| Year | Total population |        |        | Literate |        |        | Percentage |       |        |
|------|------------------|--------|--------|----------|--------|--------|------------|-------|--------|
|      | Total            | Male   | Female | Total    | Male   | Female | Total      | Male  | Female |
| 1901 | 91,873           | 49,384 | 41,489 | 1,033    | 1,022  | 11     | 1.01       | 2     | 0      |
| 1911 | 93,107           | 50,009 | 43,098 | 1,614    | 1,589  | 25     | 1.7        | 3.1   | 05     |
| 1921 | 98,000           | 52,306 | 45,694 | 3,371    | 3,259  | 112    | 3.1        | 6.2   | 02     |
| 1931 | 1,00,994         | 53,154 | 47,840 | 2,520    | 2,420  | 100    | 2.3        | 4.5   | 2      |
| 1941 | 1,10,336         | 56,935 | 53,401 | NA       | NA     | NA     | NA         | NA    | NA     |
| 1951 | 1,26,099         | 64,738 | 61,316 | 7,052    | 6,221  | 831    | 5.5        | 9.6   | 1.3    |
| 1961 | 1,58,544         | 81,102 | 77,442 | 30,899   | 25,798 | 5,101  | 18.5       | 30.94 | 6.4    |
| 1971 | 1,94,786         | 97,758 | 97,028 | —        | —      | —      | 32.83      | 44.66 | 21.00  |

In 1901 according to the census figures given above, the literacy among the masses of the district was absolutely low, more particularly, among the females. It is distressing to note that out of 41,489 women only 11 were literate. Only an insignificant increase in the percentage of literacy was disclosed by the count held in 1911 census. The next census showed about 100 per cent increase in the case of literate males but the percentage of literacy among the females obstinately persisted on its lowest. The people, ignorant, custom ridden and happy in their isolation, were not attracted by schools or literacy. The census report of 1931 also reveals a distressing state of illiteracy. Only four per cent of the male population knew reading and writing. Among females not more than a hundred out of the fifty thousand were found literate. Only three hundred children were under instruction up to the high school stage, by far the largest majority being in the first three years of schools. The system of inspection or guidance in rural education had not then been evolved. As a result of certain efforts by the then State Administration, the number of scholars studying in public institutions rose from three hundred in 1933 to over four thousand in 1944 and the percentage of literacy quadrupled itself from

2.3 per cent in 1931 to over ten in 1944-45. The census count of 1951 enumerated 7,052 literate persons constituting 2.4 per cent of the total population. Out of them 9.6 per cent were male and 1.3 per cent female which contrast well with the percentages worked out in decennial census of 1931. The results of the enumeration during 1961 and 1971 censuses, in this field, are still encouraging inasmuch as out of the total population, 19 per cent have been returned as literate in 1961 and 32.8 per cent in 1971. Percentage of literate males has also risen to 30.94 in 1961 and 44.66 in 1971 and that of females has touched the figure of 6.4 in 1961 and 21 in 1971. This would seem to be a great stride pregnant with hope and courage.

The census held in 1951 reveals the number of graduates and the matriculates to be thirty-three and two hundred and thirty-five respectively. By 1961 census the position had improved much as there were 647 matriculates and higher secondary pass, sixteen technical diploma holders, thirty-six non-technical diploma holders, seventy-nine graduation or post graduation degree holders and fifty-eight technical degree holders in the urban areas. In rural areas the persons enumerated as matriculates or above were 1,447. Census of 1971 reveals that the position of literacy was further improved.

#### **Spread of education among women**

Even a cursory look at the narrative given above would show that the female education in the past has been at its lowest. This is not surprising, when we take into account the slower pace of literacy among the weaker sex, even in such areas that were more favourably situated all over the country. In this sequestered territory, the idea of female education could hardly commended itself and much less put into practice. Household duties, a natural assignment of females, affording them little leisure to mix up in the society precluded them from getting a chance to acquire knowledge and widening their outlook. During the census of 1951 only 1.3 per cent females were returned as literate. The census of 1961 reveals a better picture placing the percentage of women at 6.4 per cent. Census of 1971 gives a still better picture with 21 per cent of women as literates. The increase, however small it may look, is well-nigh a welcome feature of the growth of literacy and portends a brighter future for the females. By 1963 there were, a higher secondary and two middle schools for girls within the limits of this district and the number of students was gradually mounting high.

#### **Spread of education among backward classes and tribes**

It is idle to think that in the past scheduled castes and tribes would acquire knowledge with the same ease as their more fortunate brethren.



Like women, they too were treated, in the matter of education, contemptuously, because according to the past notions they, as a class, were regarded to have been born in lower class of the society and branded as untouchables: unfit to acquire knowledge. This psychology greatly hampered their all-round mental development. No attempt would seem to have been made to keep a record of the spread of education exclusively among the scheduled castes and tribes. But this omission makes no difference, because any such effort would have revealed disturbing state of low percentage of literacy. The things however, took a turn to the better with the attainment of Independence by the country inasmuch as special attention began to be paid, among other things, to their educational development. Students belonging to the scheduled castes and tribes began to be encouraged to prosecute their studies with sustained efforts, by award of a variety of stipends, scholarships and subsidies. Certain organisations such as Harijan Sewak Sangh have started hostels for scheduled caste students where nothing is charged from them. This special care through special measure brought about a phenomenal change towards the better among these classes. If these efforts continue, as they are likely to be, the time is not far, when the members of scheduled castes and tribes would attain a status, in all walks of life, including literacy, not in any way inferior to that of the other classes.

### GENERAL EDUCATION

The line of growth of literacy and spread of education, during the pre-merger period has already been traced earlier. On 31st March, 1957, viz. during the post-merger period, there were within this district, one pre-primary school, ninety-two primary schools, fifty-five junior basic schools, ten middle schools, three senior basic schools for boys and one senior basic (middle) school for girls, five high schools for boys and one for girls and one college. Besides these Government institutions there were four primary schools and a middle school being run privately. There were 17,541 students or scholars on the roll of all the Government institutions on March 31, 1957.

As a result of special drives, as mentioned above, coupled with usual vigorous departmental efforts to spread education and increase the percentage of literacy the number of educational institutions has increased appreciably during the recent years. In 1953 there were, a degree college, eight higher secondary schools including one for girls, six high schools, seventeen middle schools including two for girls, 127 primary traditional schools, ten junior basic schools and three pre primary schools bringing the total number of institutions to one hundred and seventy-two. This number rose to as many as, one degree college, eight higher secondary

schools, 17 high schools, fifty-six middle schools, 194 primary schools and three pre-primary schools, in 1974. Details of all kinds of institutions together with blockwise location of places are given in Appendix No. III.

Although the *Compulsory Education Act* has not been enforced so far, yet special drives are occasionally launched to make people realise the importance of education and to induce them to send their wards to the schools without any hitch or hesitation. Accordingly with a view to enrolling at least seventy-two per cent of children of age group six to eleven in primary schools, an 'enrolment drive week' was launched throughout Himachal Pradesh with effect from Himachal Day, April 15, 1961. In order to urge the people to send their children to schools, local enrolment committees were constituted to educate the people and thus make the area more education minded.

### **Pre-primary education**

As a rule, education started to be imparted to children who have completed five years of age, but in the elementary stage the nursery classes are held for the children below the age of six years and this constitutes the pre-primary education. In these schools the children are given an informal education preparatory to begin to learn reading and writing. Its primary goal is to cultivate, among the children, the habit of discipline, understanding, reading and learning. There are only three pre-primary schools in the district.

### **Primary education**

The education career of a student starts from the primary stage. The period of primary education extends for five years. There were one hundred and ninety-four traditional primary schools in this district till 1974. The Government had introduced the basic education system as a result of which ten junior basic schools had been opened in this district till 1963. The system aimed at making the students useful citizens possessed with skill and self-confidence, to earn by labour without learning towards service. During schooling the students are infused with the habit of learning and earning by doing. The system, however, came to an end in 1963-64.

### **Middle schools**

After the completion of primary education commences the middle classes for three years. There were seventeen middle schools including two for girls in 1963 and fifty-two including one exclusively for girls in 1973. This number rose to 56 in 1974.

High school education extends for two years after the middle standard. There were six high schools in 1963 which number rose to fourteen in 1973 and to 17 in 1974.

### Higher Secondary Schools

The scheme of higher secondary education was introduced in Himachal Pradesh, and, for that matter in this district, in the year 1959 for the first time. Since its introduction till March, 1973, eight high schools had been upgraded to the higher secondary status. These are the girls higher secondary school, Bilaspur, the boys higher secondary school Ghamarwin, Barthin, Swahn, Bharari, Hatwar, Talai and Kandror. The former two were converted in April, 1959, while the latter in April, 1960. None of the higher secondary institutions are managed or run either by a Municipal Committee, a District Board or by private individuals. There has been no change in the number of such schools till 1974.

### University education

The district is served with a degree college located at Bilaspur. It was started in 1952-53 as an intermediate college and subsequently, in the year 1958, upgraded to the degree standard. This institution is affiliated with the Himachal Pradesh University in regard to pre-university science and humanities groups, pre-engineering, pre-medical, three years B. Sc. (Physics and Chemistry only), three years degree course arts with geography and music. On March 31, 1952, there were nineteen scholars, including a female, on its rolls. By the end of March, 1959, the number of scholars on the roll had risen to ninety-seven including eighteen females and four scheduled caste students. By March, 1973, there were 782 boys and 162 girls receiving education in this college. A hostel is also attached to the college which provides accommodation to 48 boy students. Every male student for the first two years' stay in the college must participate in one of the two schemes i. e., National Cadet Corps or recently introduced National Service Corps. Under the latter scheme the students voluntarily undertake social services. The college also brings out an annual magazine *Vyas* to provide forum for creative and original writing.

So far no arrangements exist for the professional and technical education, as well as for the cultivation of fine arts, within the district. Similarly there are no oriental schools and colleges run and managed by the Government. The Municipal Committee, Naina Devi, is running Sanskrit *pathshala* at Naina Devi which is still unrecognised. This *pathshala* is managed and financed by the Municipal Committee. The Naina Devi temple committee also gives some aid. Arrangements of education for the handicapped are also conspicuous by their absence.

## BASIC EDUCATION

As mentioned above there were on March 31, 1957 fifty-five junior basic schools in which certain handicrafts, such as agriculture, spinning, chalk making, book binding and soap making were taught. Agriculture was taught, in these schools, as an optional subject and almost every school had a farm of its own, with an area, varying from school to school, and, ranging between one and five bighas. The total number of students of basic schools, on March 31, 1957 was 6,337.

Great stress was laid on the popularisation of the basic education i. e. earning by learning and learning by doing. 'Basic education weeks' were inaugurated occasionally in which lectures were delivered by high dignitaries of the Administration. Introduction of this system of the education had almost revolutionised the traditionally accepted concept of education and brought about a fundamental change in the curriculum of syllabus. To raise the standard of basic education and to make it conform more closely to the objects of basic education, a Board, styled as the 'Himachal Pradesh Board of Basic Education' was set up at the State level. The Board was a standing and advisory body with the Director of Education, Himachal Pradesh, as the Chairman.

### National Cadet Corps

The aims and objects of National Cadet Corps are to impart training to all able bodied and eligible boys and girls with special emphasis on the development of qualities of leadership and discipline and to impart progressive military training to them so that they could serve as a potential organ for officers of the Indian Forces. The Auxiliary Cadet Corps covers younger boys and it has no element of military training in it.

*National Cadet Corps Act (Act No. XXXI of 1948)* came into force in the whole of India including erstwhile (part C) State of Bilaspur in the year 1953. As a result of the implementation of the aforesaid Act certain troops and platoons have been raised in various educational institutions as detailed below.

### Auxiliary Cadet Corps

|                                     |           |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| Higher Secondary School, Ghamarwin. | 1 troop.  |
| Higher Secondary School, Bharari.   | 2 troops. |
| High School, Bilaspur.              | 1 troop.  |
| High School, Jukhala.               | 1 troop.  |

|                         |          |
|-------------------------|----------|
| High School, Jhandutta. | 1 troop. |
|-------------------------|----------|

|                     |          |
|---------------------|----------|
| Middle School, Aur. | 1 troop. |
|---------------------|----------|

#### National Cadet Corps

|                                   |            |
|-----------------------------------|------------|
| Higher Secondary School, Bharari. | 1 platoon. |
|-----------------------------------|------------|

|                                   |            |
|-----------------------------------|------------|
| Higher Secondary School, Barthin. | 1 platoon. |
|-----------------------------------|------------|

|                                     |            |
|-------------------------------------|------------|
| Higher Secondary School, Ghamarwin. | 1 platoon. |
|-------------------------------------|------------|

|                        |            |
|------------------------|------------|
| High School, Bilaspur. | 1 platoon. |
|------------------------|------------|

|                       |            |
|-----------------------|------------|
| High School, Kuthera. | 1 platoon. |
|-----------------------|------------|

#### Naval National Cadet Corps

It was on the 9th January, 1963 when the Lieutenant-Governor, Himachal Pradesh announced at Bilaspur that a first inland Naval National Cadet Corps unit would be started in Bilaspur situated on the bank of Gobind Sagar, and, called upon the students of Himachal Pradesh to derive full advantage of the Unit. As a consequence of this announcement the Naval National Cadet Corps unit came to be established in Bilaspur in March 1963. At present there are two Commissioned Officers in-charge of the scheme with a sanctioned strength of two hundred cadets though there is so far only one platoon of the strength of sixty cadets. Like the Commissioned Officers of the National Cadet Corps the Commissioned Officers of the Naval National Cadet Corps get honararium at the rate of fifty rupees per mensem each.

### ADULT LITERACY AND SOCIAL EDUCATION

A systematic effort by way of adopting measures for the spread of literacy, education and culture among the people was made only after the launching of community development programme in 1952.

The district is covered by three development blocks and in each block there is one male Social Education Organiser and one Lady Social Education Organiser, who look to social education and adult literacy work. They tour from village to village and impart all sorts of useful information to the people and also open adult literacy centres in the villages. Dramas, *bhajan* parties and *kirtans* are organised for the benefit of the rural masses. After intensive work for over three years, the blocks were converted into national extension service blocks and the work is going ahead. There are ten *gram sewaks* and *sewikas* in each block, who are multipurpose trained men and women, and it is also one of their functions to advance adult literacy and

social education work in their circles, under the guidance of the Social Education Organisers and the Block Development Officer.

Cinema shows on useful subjects such as social education, adult literacy, better methods of agriculture, public health and education etc. are given by the block development staff, and the District Public Relations Officer, stationed in the district, for the benefit of the people. Village leader camps and social gatherings are arranged to improve cultural relations. Small village libraries and information centres have been started in the rural areas. Books and pamphlets are distributed and cultural and recreational programmes are organised. Besides, *mahila samitis* are formed and a number of social gatherings organised and demonstrations are given to village women on cooking, knitting and sewing etc. In addition *gram sahayak* camps are organised in which *gram sahayaks* are trained. These steps are calculated to diffuse culture among the masses.

#### **Cultural, literary and scientific societies**

Kahluri culture is claimed to be an ancient one permeating and deep rooted, although due to long neglect the talents of the people for a time became blunt and rusty. Kahlur has its own well developed mother tongue and its own script (Tankri), which was the official language of the erstwhile State. Kahluri dress is a blend of that of the hills and of the plains. The aesthetic sense of the people be-speaks of a brilliant past. In the sphere of dramatics and acting the local talent is all the more effusive. All these aspects of a rich and refined life deserve continuous effort for revival and rejuvenation and for all this, Government enterprise and public undertaking and co-operation are essential.

The area has been well known for folk arts and crafts. Ballads and lyrics composed by its romantic poets, sung in local dialect, are recited with fervour in the remotest recesses of the district and even elsewhere in the hills. A wealth of them records events of importance in the long history of the erstwhile State. Sculpture must have been the art of the leaders of the society. Temple slabs and statues show very refined taste. Choice product of leather craftsmanship from here is said to have been placed in the London Museum. Horsemanship and sword play, it appears, have been a regular pastime of the people, but they have disappeared now. Mountain trekking has been practised since times immemorial. Fairs and festivals celebrated here exhibit a high civic sense of association and social discipline. More recently activities in the area have shown a definite advance. Sometime ago a Kahlur culture league was formed by Raja Anand Chand. About its activities nothing is forthcoming.

Bilaspur, like other hill States, whose people have led a secluded life from times immemorial, has preserved sociological features that belong to a by gone age. Its folklore, and indigenous dances, its seasonal and harvest festivals, with a custom, that still prevails, of sending out wandering minstrels at certain times of the year lend an old world charm to the daily life of the people. The new costumes which one sees in the plains of India presenting rather a colourless and hybrid monotony have not yet fully penetrated into remote hills. A wanderer in these parts may still come face to face with modes of dress and behaviour surprisingly reminiscent of ancient Hindu and Mogul periods.

So far, however, there does not exist any society, engaged exclusively in cultural, literary and scientific activities. Nor are there any cultural, literary and scientific periodicals to highlight and organise these ancient customs, folklore, fairs and festivals to give them a cultural and educational bias without robbing them of their religious sanctity or economic usefulness.

#### LIBRARIES, MUSEUMS AND BOTANICAL AND ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS

The need of libraries is intimately related to the percentage of literacy obtaining in a particular area, and it has been remarked already that the percentage of literacy in Bilaspur district is not so high as would warrant the existence of so many libraries. Nevertheless, there is a district library, a college library and high and higher secondary schools libraries. Outside the capital each Higher Secondary, High and Middle School has been provided with a library. Apart from this, two libraries have been organised in each *gram* panchayat circle which are looked after by the panchayat Secretaries. More than a decade back a mobile library service was introduced with headquarters at Mandi. It is being impressed upon the villagers to develop a reading habit in order to derive maximum advantage of this novel scheme. Under this scheme twelve integrated library centres, called *pargana* libraries, were also established one in each *pargana*, for the benefit of the rural public under the First Five Year Plan. These centres maintain about one hundred periodicals now.

The District library, originally known as public library, was established at Bilaspur in the year 1956 with a meagre stock of 300 books. First'y, it was under the control of an Education Officer but later on it was made over to the District Inspector of Schools redesignated as the District Education Officer, and its name was also changed from Public Library to District Library on October 2, 1952. Originally housed in a Government building having two rooms in the old town the Library was shifted to private building in 1962 and again in October, 1965 to the present building constructed at a cost of one lakh and six thousand rupees.

It has as many as 17,134 books (as on 31-3-1973) and subscribes for twelve dailies, nine weeklies, eight fortnightlies and twenty monthlies. The library has been spread over Gandhi section, section on war and current topics, reference section and children section. A separate children's section was also started in the District Library which attracted a large number of children because there is also special provision for indoor games, toys, pictorial magazines besides the books meant for children. The total membership at present is about 1,200.

The library is thus playing significant role in creating educational and social environment of the citizens of the whole district especially of the town. The daily average number of visitors is about two hundred and fifty.

There are eighty panchayat libraries scattered all over the district, forty being maintained by the Gram Panchayats and forty by the Nyaya Panchayats. Each Gram Panchayat library contains about four hundred books and the Nyaya Panchayat library about a hundred books. Libraries are in the panchayat ghars.

There is no uniformity among the panchayats in the matter of subscribing to periodicals. They subscribe towards different periodicals according to availability of funds. There are no botanical and zoological gardens in the district.



# Chapter XVI

## MEDICAL AND PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

### Survey of public health and medical facilities in early times

Though nothing can be said precisely about the forms of measures, other than medicines, adopted to get rid of diseases in the ancient times, but it can be safely presumed that there must have existed some sort of practice in magic etc, peculiar to local climate and beliefs. The assumption is based on, and is strengthened by, the fact that traces of such practices are still evident in some areas. Guga for instance is propitiated to rid the sufferers of the dangers of snake bites and evil spirits. In the former case the Guga is supposed to be specially efficacious. Any person suffering from snake bite is usually taken to a Guga temple, where the priest examines him and mutters incantations. Some patients recover others not, but the belief in the deity still remains. Similarly Narsing Bir, worshipped both by men and women is believed to grant sons and provide assistance in all difficulties. Sterile women consulting a chela or a jogi are usually advised to worship Narsing Bir for offsprings. Also Deo Sur, supposed to be greater than the Narsing Bir is believed to possess the same attributes. He is said to be the master and Narsing Bir his second. Then there are several sati stones, which mark the places where widows are believed to have been burnt with their husbands, with a somewhat more sinister significance. The spirit of a woman is supposed to be capable of inflicting injury on her descendants, and is therefore propitiated with prayers and offerings on certain chosen days. Cure from ailment was, in many cases, sought in certain natural water springs or ponds. There are still many water sources where people go for treatment. A spring, called Luhnd, in village Dadrana, pargana Fatehpur, and close to Swarghat bungalow, is believed to contain water of reputed medicinal properties. It is resorted to particularly in May by people suffering from goitre and various other complaints. At Markand, about twenty kilometres away from Blasapur, is a water spring of ancient fame. A fair is held here every year on a certain night. People flock to the place even from far away places to bathe, as it is commonly believed that in this spring a bath cures sterility and infant diseases. Similarly at village Hatwar, tahsil Ghamarwin, there is a pond the water of which is believed to possess medicinal quality of curing many diseases. Here too a fair takes place on the Baisakhi day when many take bath in it.

Like other States in India the Ayurvedic and Unani systems had been in vogue in Bilaspur till recent times. *Hakims* and *vaid*s with considerable reputation in the neighbourhood had flourished so long as the patronage of the rulers in the State had been forthcoming. But with the opening of the first centre in allopathic treatment, the indigenous system gradually declined in importance as well as in extent. During the decade (1930-40) efforts were again made to revive the indigenous system and ever since Ayurvedic dispensaries and qualified man are being added gradually to allopathic medical system.

The first centre of allopathic treatment was opened for the general public in the year 1885, when Raja Amar Chand started hospital after his name at Bilaspur. It was only in 1905 that a proper building was constructed having accommodation for indoor patients, both male and female and provided indoor and outdoor facilities. By 1933 the hospital had 12 beds and was provided with an operation theatre, a clinical laboratory and further equipped with the latest instruments for examination and surgical work. An optician and a nurse, trained at State expense, were also attached to it. This single, even though efficient, institution named Shri Amar Chand Hospital, was however, regarded insufficient, except as a beginning for the gradual development of a Medical Department by the erstwhile State. As the original building of the hospital has submerged under the Gobind Sagar, it has been shifted to the new township of Bilaspur.

On the eastern side of the famous Sandhu ground, at a short distance away, stood Shri Bijai War Memorial Hospital for women. It was meant to commemorate the war effort of the people of the erstwhile Bilaspur State during the First World War, and also to fulfil the long-felt want of a hospital for women. It was a single storey building of modern design, erected at a cost of about Rs. 24,000/- fitted with twenty beds in spacious and airy wards, two special rooms for labour cases, clinical laboratory, operation theatre and other necessary equipment on a scale larger even than in the general hospital. The honour of performing the opening ceremony was accorded to the Raja of Mandi State. Residential quarters for doctors and para medical staff were provided and the treatment and attendance were free. This hospital building too has been submerged under the Gobind Sagar.

By 1941 twelve more health centres were established at the headquarters of each pargana. Some of them were in charge of Assistant Surgeons, while at the less important places were opened Ayurvedic dispensaries manned by *vaid*s. Total number of outdoor patients who received treatment in 1941 was over twenty thousand, the daily indoor

average was about ten. With the extension of medical services a need to have an inspecting agency was felt and for that three posts of Medical Inspectors were created.

The three Medical Inspectors constantly visited the pargana health centres. They also attended to medical inspection of the village school children. The compounders were responsible for dispensing medicine at the health centres, assisted the Medical Inspectors. The twelve health centres were established at Deoth, Suldha, Panjgain, Swahn, Saloa, Ghamarwin, Sepra, Chalahli, Barthin, Talai, Kalol and Gherwin. Where the upkeep of the health centres was the concern of the Central Education and the Health Committee, their superintendence, inspection and organisational responsibility fell within the domain of the rural health section of the department.

Public health work during the princely regime was mainly concerned with vaccination and free distribution of quinine in the areas where malaria was common. Anti-rabic treatment was also provided at the central hospital free of charge. A regular record of births and deaths throughout the State also began to be maintained.

The organisation of rural health development engaged the special attention of the ruler of Bilaspur who took keen interest in setting up an organisation for the execution of a regular programme of medical relief and sanitation in the rural areas. He also ordered a socio-medical survey in the State. Consequently, a special fund called the Education and Health Fund was raised. The intended organisation perhaps, sprang up in the form of a committee, and as an outcome of the deliberation of this committee a *Public Education and Health Advancement Act* was passed. Subsequently rules for the registration and licensing of v aids and *hakims* were framed.

In the year 1941 another committee of officials and medical experts under the chairmanship of the Chief Medical Officer of the State was appointed and, after making exhaustive survey, it formulated a comprehensive scheme and programme. At the health centres in each of the twelve parganas under this scheme simple but healthy and capacious buildings were put up comprising a dispensary, a store room, four indoor beds, inspection room etc. These dispensaries, apart from serving the sick in the area also served as referral centres for the General Hospital, Bilaspur. Later on the publication of the Bhole Committee report, medical and public health development measures and a two year plan for improving the existing health services was prepared and put into implementation. There existed no better arrangements for the rural sanitation, nor was there public health staff. However, vaccination was done by vaccination staff of the Punjab.

A small town committee of Bilaspur looked after the sanitation of the town. Precautionary measures were taken to check the communicable diseases and anti-cholera inoculation was undertaken throughout the area. These measures, however, did not and have still not taken away the age-old superstitions and people continue to depend upon propitiation of gods, deities, spirits, indulge in blind superstitions and traditional treatments.

### VITAL STATISTICS

It appears that vital statistics were not regularly collected in the distant past. From 1927 to 1932 births and deaths were recorded only in the Bilaspur town and these are given in the following table.

| Sex    | Total<br>population under<br>registration<br>by the census of<br>1931. | Total births and deaths registered during<br>the year. |       |       |       |       |       |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|--------|--|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
|        |  | 1927   | 1928  | 1929  | 1930  | 1931  | 1932  |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|        |  | B. D.  | B. D. | B. D. | B. D. | B. D. | B. D. |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| Male   | 1,427  | 12   | 18    | 13    | 20    | 10    | 21    | 10 | 15 | 10 | 13 | 17 | 19 |
| Female | 960  | 5  | 17    | 4     | 16    | 5     | 26    | 1  | 17 | 8  | 7  | 7  | 20 |

Since 1933 up to 1950 the record has not come to light showing the births and deaths, even though the administration report of erstwhile Bilaspur State, drawn for the decennium ending 1942-43, mentions that a regular record of births and deaths was maintained by the Medical and Public Health Department from month to month. The report further mentions that total number of births during the decade (1932-42) was 33,034 and that of deaths 24,293. From 1951 a regular record of births and deaths has been maintained and the details are given in the following table.

| Year | Births | Birth rate per<br>thousand | Deaths | Death rate per<br>thousand |
|------|--------|----------------------------|--------|----------------------------|
| 1951 | 4,068  | 32.3                       | 2,191  | 17.4                       |
| 1952 | 4,513  | 35.8                       | 2,203  | 15.5                       |
| 1953 | 4,200  | 33.3                       | 2,841  | 22.5                       |

|      |       |       |       |       |
|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1954 | 4,816 | 37.9  | 1,849 | 14.7  |
| 1955 | 4,938 | 39.9  | 1,793 | 14.5  |
| 1956 | 5,124 | 40.3  | 2,349 | 18.4  |
| 1957 | 4,937 | 39.9  | 2,107 | 17.3  |
| 1958 | 5,055 | 39.5  | 2,449 | 18.7  |
| 1959 | 4,491 | 35.8  | 1,938 | 12.3  |
| 1960 | 3,914 | 30.5  | 2,043 | 12.9  |
| 1961 | 3,466 | 21.8  | 1,431 | 9.06  |
| 1962 | 4,383 | 27.09 | 1,412 | 8.9   |
| 1963 | 3,490 | 21.09 | 1,176 | 7.4   |
| 1964 | 4,566 | 27.51 | 1,325 | 7.07  |
| 1965 | 4,658 | 27.56 | 1,366 | 7.8   |
| 1966 | 8,451 | 47.1  | 3,902 | 21.36 |
| 1967 | 5,569 | 39.9  | 1,783 | 10.0  |
| 1968 | 5,645 | 29.0  | 1,120 | 6.2   |
| 1969 | 5,513 | 30.6  | 1,174 | 8.0   |
| 1970 | 3,698 | 25.0  | 1,115 | 6.5   |
| 1971 | 2,879 | 15.0  | 882   | 4.0   |
| 1972 | 3,222 | 17.0  | 969   | 5.0   |
| 1973 | 3,680 | 19.0  | 1,128 | 6.0   |
| 1974 | 4,996 | 26.0  | 1,129 | 6.0   |

As in the case of births and deaths so also with regard to the significant causes of mortality, there is no continuous record. Statistics are, however, available since 1928 to 1932 and from 1951 onwards and are given in the subjoined table.

| Year                             | Fever | Smallpox | Cholera | All causes |
|----------------------------------|-------|----------|---------|------------|
| 1928                             | 444   | —        | —       | 1,196      |
| 1929                             | 524   | —        | —       | 765        |
| 1930                             | 402   | —        | —       | 1,261      |
| 1931                             | 458   | —        | —       | 1,488      |
| 1932                             | 510   | —        | —       | 1,926      |
| 1933                             | —     | —        | —       | —          |
| 1934                             | —     | 9        | —       | —          |
| 1935                             | —     | —        | —       | —          |
| 1936                             | —     | —        | —       | —          |
| 1937                             | —     | —        | —       | —          |
| 1938                             | —     | —        | —       | —          |
| 1939                             | —     | —        | 35      | —          |
| 1940                             | —     | —        | 1       | —          |
| 1941                             | —     | 3        | —       | —          |
| 1942 to 50 Figures not available |       |          |         |            |
| 1951                             | 1825  | 1        | —       | —          |
| 1952                             | 1887  | —        | —       | —          |
| 1953                             | 2371  | 1        | —       | —          |
| 1954                             | 1525  | —        | —       | —          |
| 1955                             | 1478  | 1        | —       | —          |
| 1956                             | 2053  | —        | —       | —          |
| 1957                             | 1821  | —        | —       | —          |
| 1958                             | 2093  | 1        | —       | —          |

|      |       |   |   |       |
|------|-------|---|---|-------|
| 1959 | 1510  | 1 | 1 | —     |
| 1960 | 1012  | — | — | 532   |
| 1961 | 1002  | — | — | 1,041 |
| 1962 | 747   | — | — | 667   |
| 1963 | 548   | 5 | — | 623   |
| 1964 | 624   | — | — | 702   |
| 1965 | 515   | — | — | 851   |
| 1966 | 1,081 | — | — | 2,519 |
| 1967 | 635   | 1 | — | 1,009 |
| 1968 | 589   | — | — | 492   |
| 1969 | 637   | — | — | 466   |
| 1970 | 561   | — | — | 488   |
| 1971 | 423   | — | — | 280   |
| 1972 | 414   | — | — | 365   |
| 1973 | 494   | — | — | 634   |
| 1974 | 589   | — | — | 350   |

### Common diseases

The common diseases that are found in this district include dysentery and diarrhoea, eye troubles, diseases due to malnutrition, goitre and anaemia, the incidence of which used to be common in the past have now decreased on account of preventive measures.

It would appear from the tables already given that fevers, including malaria, have been claiming a significant toll of human life. In order to check the menace the National Malaria Control Programme was put into operation in the year 1953. Later in 1958 the programme was switched to one of eradication. People are being educated and encouraged to fight malaria on war footing.

Malaria assumes an endemic form especially along the river basins and in areas infested with forests besides the low lying marshy tracts. As a pre-requisite to the preventive measures, malaria survey on scientific lines, in community project areas was conducted under the Five Year Plans. Medical Officers received training in malariology at the Malaria Institute of India, Delhi. They were subsequently posted to undertake anti-malaria operations. For killing the breeding ova, D. D. T. spraying work is undertaken in all malarious regions.

After the post-merger period D. D. T. spray in each and every roofed structure was carried out during the transmission season to control malaria both in urban and rural areas. The National Malaria Control Programme was introduced in this district in June, 1954, under which one round of D. D. T. spraying used to be done during the transmission season. But with the inception of National Malaria Eradication Programme from 1958 two rounds of D. D. T. spraying are being done. Alongwith regular house to house D. D. T. spraying, distribution of anti-malarial drugs, as a preventive measure, has been going on. An idea of the intensity of the malaria eradication scheme can be formed by considering the statistical information according to which 42,850 houses covering 1,31,075 souls were sprayed in 1958; 54,442 houses with 1,34,238 souls in 1959 and 54,144 houses accommodating 1,35,696 people received the benefit of spraying of D. D. T. in 1960. From 1960 surveillance programme, has been started i. e. research for indigenous, imported and relapse cases of malaria and assessment of their epidemiological significance. This programme has passed into maintenance phase in district Bilaspur. Under the maintenance phase a loose surveillance is kept on malaric positive cases. For this purpose the surveillance is divided into two divisions; passive surveillance and active surveillance. So far as this district is concerned, there has been no revival of malaria.

Incidence of smallpox, though on a small scale, was also not unknown. Regular vaccination operations were given a start in the district, from the year 1949.

In addition to the common diseases, epidemics like smallpox, cholera and plague have been claiming lives intermittently. Fortunately the deaths have been much less in number than the seizures. In 1934 the number of seizures, being fifty-five was perhaps, the largest, resulting in nine deaths, than during any other year since then till 1959. Although smallpox appeared in 1935, 1936 and 1937 out of the cases of seizures one succumbed to the fatal disease. In 1941 however, out of thirteen seizures only three lost their lives. From 1951 to 1959 there were in all ten seizures out of whom five patients died. In 1963, five sporadic cases occurred out of



which two proved fatal. During the post Independence period, whenever cases occurred, immediate steps to segregate the patients were taken and mass vaccination resorted around the areas besides other necessary preventive measures.

Venereal diseases were also prevalent in district Bilaspur during the State regime right up to the pre-Independence period. With the advent of the First Five Year Plan, the first V. D. Clinic was established at the district headquarters. Subsequently more V. D. Clinics/Units came to be established. Some of the selected places were developed into V. D. Units by attaching a technician, trained in V. D. with these primary health centres. Now there are in all four V. D. Clinics/Units functioning in the district. Besides, the V. D. team from the State Headquarters undertakes periodical tours for assessing the magnitude of the problem and for providing on the spot treatment. This is being supplemented with proper health education so much so that the incidence of this disease is on the decline. The incidence was 9.4 per cent in 1966 which dropped to 4.7 per cent in 1972.

Tuberculosis in its varied forms is also one of the diseases commonly met within the villages. Its existence may be ascribed to certain conditions under which the rural population has to live. The houses generally have inadequate accommodation and are badly ventilated. The severe cold of winter compel the poverty-stricken people to huddle up in their cells. Malnutrition which also is a by-product of the poor economic conditions of the people, conspires with the badly ventilated accommodation to cause tuberculosis. The Government, fully aware of the havoc that this disease play, has taken adequate steps for the control of the disease by establishing a number of T. B. control centres and T. B. wards with indoor accommodation.

The entire district and for that matter entire Pradesh has been covered under the B. C. G. Programme. Special T. B. isolation wards for infectious cases and a T. B. patients ward in the District Hospital were added during the year 1960 bringing the total number of beds to seventy-six.

#### **National smallpox eradication programme**

By way of implementing the recommendations of the Central Experts Committee on Smallpox as also on Cholera Eradiction, a pilot project was started in the Ghamarwin tahsil in October 1960 which lasted till March 1961. Various Vaccinators were allotted particular areas and put under a Superintendent of Vaccination. Men were employed to maintain the supply line of vaccine from the headquarters to the field according to pre-fixed programme. Inspection of vaccination followed six days after the vaccinations. For promoting the purpose of health education, co-operation of all departments was sought and influential local persons were requested to

deliver talks to the villagers. Up to March, 1961, about fifty-three per cent population of Ghamarwin tahsil had been protected.

Main object of this Pilot Project was to assess the financial and man-power requirements and, to study and find solutions to the various practical difficulties in the implementation of the programme for the entire Pradesh.

Following an evaluation report on the Pilot Project Ghamarwin, mass vaccinations were started in the Sadar tahsil of the district in February, 1962. Thus more than ninety-five per cent population of the district had been protected against smallpox. A Vaccinators training centre started at Bilaspur New Township has already turned out twenty-three vaccinators, while seven more candidates are still undergoing training.

### Vaccination

During the princely regime, vaccination was free and compulsory since 1916-17. An arrangement had been made for this purpose with the Public Health Department of the Punjab Government who deputed four vaccinators every year for this work in the erstwhile State. Primary vaccination was taken up turn by turn from circle to circle. The sub-joined table would assist in giving an idea about the vaccination work carried out in this area since 1916-17 till 1973 with the exception of the years 1923-24, 1925-26, 1943 to 1953, 1966 and 1967 for which statistics are not available.

| Years   | Total vaccinated persons. | Primary vaccination |             | Re-vaccination |             | Persons successfully vaccinated per 1,000 of population. |
|---------|---------------------------|---------------------|-------------|----------------|-------------|--|
|         |                           | Total.              | Successful. | Total.         | Successful. |  |
| 1       | 2                         | 3                   | 4           | 5              | 6           | 7  |
| 1916-17 | 639                       | 549                 | 535         | 90             | 65          | 6.41   |
| 1917-18 | 6,861                     | 4,126               | 3,961       | 2,735          | 1,856       | 62.51  |
| 1918-19 | 30,838                    | 4,647               | 4,536       | 26,191         | 20,161      | 265.25   |

| 1       | 2      | 3     | 4     | 5      | 6      | 7      |
|---------|--------|-------|-------|--------|--------|--------|
| 1919-20 | 135    | 5     | 5     | 130    | 96     | 1.08   |
| 1920-21 | 7,379  | 2,414 | 2,178 | 4,965  | 2,541  | 65.68  |
| 1921-22 | 3,311  | 862   | 741   | 2,449  | 1,613  | 24.02  |
| 1922-23 | 25,018 | 4,223 | 2,767 | 20,795 | 11,036 | 140.85 |
| 1924-25 | 31,989 | 7,093 | 6,918 | 24,908 | 6,290  | 236.82 |
| 1926-27 | 8,022  | 1,977 | 1,789 | 6,045  | 3,015  | 49.02  |
| 1927-28 | 10,048 | 3,846 | 3,448 | 6,202  | 1,954  | 55.07  |
| 1928-29 | 2,680  | 2,134 | 2,048 | 546    | 47     | 21.37  |
| 1929-30 | 3,627  | 3,282 | 3,222 | 345    | 102    | 33.91  |
| 1930-31 | 6,974  | 799   | 717   | 6,175  | 2,840  | 26.16  |
| 1931-32 | 577    | 166   | 145   | 411    | 190    | —      |
| 1932-33 | 26,438 | —     | —     | —      | —      | 115.4  |
| 1933-34 | 31,910 | —     | —     | —      | —      | 180.9  |
| 1935    | 10,602 | —     | —     | —      | —      | 59.5   |
| 1936    | 6,401  | —     | —     | —      | —      | 1.01   |
| 1937    | 3,343  | —     | —     | —      | —      | 22.5   |
| 1938    | 3,972  | —     | —     | —      | —      | 31.80  |
| 1939    | 3,840  | —     | —     | —      | —      | 33.92  |
| 1940    | 8,708  | —     | —     | —      | —      | 61.08  |
| 1941    | 14,428 | —     | —     | —      | —      | 67.64  |
| 1942    | 51,401 | —     | —     | —      | —      | 253.49 |
| 1954    | 10,331 | 5,762 | 4,725 | 4,569  | 4,725  | 37.3   |
| 1955    | 10,697 | 3,512 | 3,104 | 7,185  | 3,104  | 24.6   |

| 1    | 2      | 3      | 4      | 5      | 6      | 7    |
|------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|------|
| 1956 | 12,645 | 4,065  | 3,492  | 8,580  | 3,592  | 27.6 |
| 1957 | 11,481 | 4,959  | 3,835  | 6,522  | 3,835  | 30.4 |
| 1958 | 9,587  | 3,592  | 2,832  | 5,995  | 3,534  | 32.3 |
| 1959 | 10,323 | 5,692  | 3,814  | 4,631  | 3,553  | 30.5 |
| 1960 | 8,822  | 3,091  | 9,024  | 5,331  | 3,859  | 34.6 |
| 1961 | 11,345 | 2,010  | 1,349  | 9,335  | 8,380  | 29.6 |
| 1962 | 1,924  | 972    | 731    | 952    | 96     | 22.1 |
| 1963 | —      | 4,022  | —      | —      | —      | —    |
| 1964 | 42,414 | 6,220  | 10,910 | 36,194 | 7,485  | —    |
| 1965 | —      | 13,485 | 10,910 | —      | —      | —    |
| 1968 | 55,461 | 9,112  | 7,479  | 47,349 | 36,523 | —    |
| 1969 | 57,149 | 7,962  | 6,780  | 49,187 | 31,363 | —    |
| 1970 | 50,410 | 6,363  | 5,325  | 44,047 | 32,118 | —    |
| 1971 | 33,021 | 6,848  | 5,950  | 26,173 | 16,213 | —    |
| 1972 | 80,619 | 6,333  | 5,447  | 74,286 | 49,605 | —    |
| 1973 | 61,611 | 5,353  | 4,672  | 56,328 | 37,851 | —    |

Primary vaccination is compulsory under the *Vaccination Act, 1880* as applicable to Bilaspur district since 1948.

### SANITATION

#### Activities of health and sanitary organisation

A separate Public Health Programme at district level is also functioning. This consists of Sanitary Inspectors, Vaccinators and *beldars*. Similarly for the eradication of malaria, an agency of Senior Malaria Inspectors.

Surveillance Inspectors and surveillance workers and *beldars* are there to assist him.

The administrative set up of public health and sanitation comprises a Health Officer, six Sanitary Inspectors, posted one each at Bilaspur, Markand, Ghamarwin, Jhandutta, Bassi and Barthin, two Vaccinators and five *beldars*. As regards rural areas the health department has undertaken the construction work of ever-clean or flush latrines. The district has been divided into six parts for administrative convenience with regard to sanitation. Each Sanitary Inspector is incharge of environmental sanitation and adulterated food control with the assistance of a *beldar*. Immunisation programme is effective in the district since 1970. For vaccination purpose the district stands split up into two equal parts and the work is carried out by the Vaccinators in their respective jurisdiction. All the employees are directly responsible to the Medical Officer of Health.

Arrangements for dissemination of knowledge to the public, on birth control and nutrition, exist in each maternity and child welfare centre and in every primary health centre. There are combined provisions of curative and preventive measures in the primary health centres. Apart from dispensing medicines, they look after the rural sanitation and carry out different health activities by conducting health education. They hold health survey of the villages with the help of Sanitary Inspectors. Group talks on family planning are arranged by the public health centres. The Lady Health Visitor visits houses to render advice about maternity and child health and conducts delivery cases in the houses. In abnormal cases, she as far as possible, arranges to transport the expectant mothers to the hospital.

### **Family planning**

A study of the population figures of Bilaspur will reveal that the population in this district is growing at an alarming rate. There had been also rapid urbanisation as a consequence of the migration of the population into the urban areas. 'If this rapid growth is allowed to go unchecked, it is bound to nullify all the developmental activities. Giving due allowance to this fact, Family Planning was given a place of priority in planning the developmental activities in this area. The Family Planning clinic came to be established during the First Five Year Plan and as a result of increasing stress there are now four Family Planning Centers in the district. Besides, these clinical facilities exist now in the district hospital, ayurvedic dispensaries and civil hospitals and dispensaries and primary health centres for dissemination of the Family Planning message to the general public and distribution of contraceptives. Besides, organisation of Family Planning Camps is a regular feature.

All these efforts are calculated to encourage people in the matter of Family Planning and to educate and enlighten them about the right nutrition habits. In order to have an idea of the activities relating to birth control or Family Planning, mention of some important statistics relating to the year 1972-73 will suffice. 703 sterilization operations were carried out; as many as 34,234 *nirodhs* (contraceptives) were distributed; 57,763 persons received advice in the matter of Family Planning and child welfare and 4,890 persons were contacted at their houses by special workers to propagate the Family Planning programme.

The problem of slum clearance does not pose itself anywhere in the district. In the rural areas it is non-existent. Underground drainages are now being built in the New Bilaspur Township. In the new township protected water supply has also been ensured with other modern facilities. About sixty per cent of the total villages in the district are provided with protected water supply schemes. There is no evidence of water borne diseases.

#### **Public hospitals and dispensaries**

Notwithstanding the number of hospitals and health centres, placed at fourteen, vide Bilaspur Administration Report 1942-43, mentioned earlier, the new regime inherited only two hospitals at the headquarters for men and women, two dispensaries at Panjgain and Bharari and four *vaid ghars* at Barthin, Kalol, Suldha and Talai. The hospital at the headquarters was capable of accommodating about twenty patients. This institution was manned by four Doctors including a Lady Doctor and there were, besides, six compounders, four *vaid*s and two nurses/midwives and dais employed in the State. After the merger of Bilaspur State, the area like other districts of Himachal Pradesh came within the fold of Five Year Plans. Due attention was paid towards the re-organisation and augmentation of the medical and health services so as to serve the entire population adequately.

As a result of these efforts, there were, by the end of Second Five Year Plan, two hospitals located at Bilaspur and Ghamarwin, seven allopathic dispensaries located at Bharari, Panjgain, Barthin, Kalol, Saloa, Markand and Ghamarwin, and ten ayurvedic dispensaries in village Talai, Gherwin, Deoth, Namol, Kuthera, Shri Naina Devi Ji, Swahn, Chalahli, Tepra and Suldha.

Increase in the number of medical institutions necessitated and resulted in the addition to the number of doctors and nurses etc. By the end of the Second Five Year Plan there were working within the district, a District Medical Officer, a Lady Assistant Surgeon, a Dental Surgeon, ten Assistant Surgeons, seven Staff Nurses, sixteen Compounders and nine *Vaid*s. Accommodation for indoor patients also increased to a great extent.

Coming to the present, Bilaspur is being served by one district hospital, primary health centres, civil dispensaries, ayurvedic dispensaries, several treatment and follow up clinics. The people of the district have also become more health conscious and avail themselves of the various facilities available through the medical institutions.

### District hospital, Bilaspur

The District hospital has been functioning since State regime and in the course of past years has come to be fully equipped and staffed. In the beginning it was a 30-bedded hospital. At present there are, in all, 144 beds and 14 Doctors working in this hospital. It is housed in a newly built double storey building with modern electric, water and sanitary fittings. It is equipped with X-ray, V. D., Leprosy, Family Planning, Dental, T. B. and Eye and E. N. T. Clinics. The T. B., Dental and Eye and E. N. T. Clinics are manned by specialists.

The following medical institutions were functioning in the district on 31st March, 1974.

| S. No. | Name of medical institution       | Bed strength | Sanctioned strength |
|--------|-----------------------------------|--------------|---------------------|
| 1.     | District hospital, Bilaspur.      | 144          | 14 Doctors          |
| 2.     | Primary health centre, Jhandutta. | 6            | 1 Doctor            |
| 3.     | „ „ „ Markand.                    | 6            | 1 „                 |
| 4.     | „ „ „ Ghamarwin.                  | 16           | 1 „                 |
| 5.     | Civil dispensary, Panjgain.       | 12           | 1 „                 |
| 6.     | „ „ Saloa.                        | 1            | 1 Compounder        |
| 7.     | „ „ Namol.                        | 2            | „                   |
| 8.     | „ „ Swahn.                        | 2            | „                   |
| 9.     | „ „ Chharol.                      | —            | —                   |
| 10.    | „ „ Bharari.                      | 12           | 1 Doctor            |
| 11.    | „ „ Kalol.                        | 6            | 1 Compounder        |

|     |                   |          |    |              |
|-----|-------------------|----------|----|--------------|
| 12. | Civil Dispensary, | Barthin. | 12 | 1 Doctor     |
| 13. | „ „               | Tarsu.   | —  | 1 Compounder |
| 14. | „ „               | Bhakra.  | —  | —do—         |
| 15. | „ „               | Manwa.   | —  | —do—         |
| 16. | „ „               | Gherwin. | 2  | —do—         |
| 17. | „ „               | Dadhol.  | —  | —do—         |
| 18. | „ „               | Kuthera. | —  | —            |
| 19. | „ „               | Raora.   | —  | —            |

### Ayurvedic dispensaries

| S. No. | Name of medical institution.              | Bed strength | Sanctioned strength |
|--------|---|--------------|---------------------|
| 1.     | Ayurvedic Dispensary, Shri Naina Devi Ji. | 2            |                     |
| 2.     | „ „ Bassi.                                | 2            |                     |
| 3.     | „ „ Deoth.                                | —            |                     |
| 4.     | „ „ Suldha.                               | 2            |                     |
| 5.     | „ „ Zakatkhana                            | —            | One vaid in         |
| 6.     | „ „ Sikroha.                              | 2            | each Institution.   |
| 7.     | „ „ Zadukulzar.                           | 2            |                     |
| 8.     | „ „ Kandrur.                              | 2            |                     |
| 9.     | „ „ Dhanni.                               | 2            |                     |
| 10.    | „ „ Bahal.                                | —            |                     |
| 11.    | „ „ Talai.                                | 2            |                     |
| 12.    | „ „ Ghandhir.                             | 2            |                     |



|     |                      |           |             |                    |
|-----|----------------------|-----------|-------------|--------------------|
| 13. | Ayurvedic Dispensary | Chalahli. | 1           |                    |
| 14. | „                    | „         | Hatwar.     | —                  |
| 15. | „                    | „         | Hawan.      | —                  |
| 16. | „                    | „         | Koserian.   | —                  |
| 17. | „                    | „         | Thorahan.   | 2 One Vaid in each |
| 18. | „                    | „         | Kapahra.    | 2 institution.     |
| 19. | „                    | „         | Bharota.    | 2                  |
| 20. | „                    | „         | Aur.        | —                  |
| 21. | „                    | „         | Jejwin.     | —                  |
| 22. | „                    | „         | Rani Kotla. | —                  |

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The organisation of many of these new dispensaries both ayurvedic and allopathic, besides the maternity and child welfare centres, at various places, has to a large extent met the needs of the people and has eased the problem of providing medical facilities in the rural areas as well. An institution normally caters to the medical needs of a population living approximately within a radius of ten kilometres. During the outbreaks of epidemics, Public Health Department takes immediate and special steps, such as segregating the affected cases, mass vaccination and inoculation for which special teams are deputed from the district and even State headquarters.

Apart from these general hospitals and dispensaries arrangements have been made with regard to maternity and child welfare care. A number of maternity and child welfare centres were organised during the last ten years. There are at present five such centres located at Bilaspur, Barthin, Panjgain, Ghamarwin and Bharari. The staff establishment in each centre consists of a Lady Health Visitor, a Midwife and a menial worker. There are four maternity beds in the District Hospital, Bilaspur and beds and provisions for maternity treatment exist in each primary health centre also. Training of midwives and dais is undertaken in the primary health centres.

#### Medical organisation

The medical organisation in the district is headed by a Chief Medical Officer. He acts as the Inspecting Officer of all Government Medical institutions functioning in the district and is responsible for maintaining efficiency and discipline therein. He is assisted by the following staff at the District Hospital, Bilaspur.

1. Civil Surgeon.
2. Surgical Specialist.
3. Medical Specialist.
4. Gynaecologist.
5. Eye and E. N. T. Specialist.
6. Paediatrician.
7. Medical Officer, Tuberculosis.
8. Medical Officer, Venereal Diseases.
9. Medical Officer, Leprosy.
10. Pathologist.
11. Radiologist.
12. Nursing Superintendent.
13. Medical Officer, Health.
14. Dental Surgeon.

No medical and public health research centres have been started. However, survey work in goitre, venereal diseases, leprosy, and malaria have been done in order to formulate further programme. As this district falls in the goitre belt, suitable measures were taken for the control of the disease. People are advised to take iodised salt.

A peep into the past about the set up responsible for public health would not be misplaced. It is asserted that the medical and public health department was before the integration of State, under the Chief Medical Officer of the State who acted as Secretary to the ruler in this Department. He was assisted by Resident Doctors in the two general hospitals at the centre, and by three Medical Inspectors, who were responsible for the efficient running of the pargana health centres as well as for public health and sanitation in the rural areas. Under them functioned compounders and midwives assigned to the various parganas.

The medical staff, both at the centre and in the mofussil, has tended considerably to fluctuate and fall in strength because of the Second World War. It was hoped in 1942 that in the next three years, the situation would be partially eased with the return of medical men, especially being trained at State expense, but the Department did not hope to have its full personnel except after the end of the War. The execution of the planned medical relief and public health was therefore to wait till then. In fact medical services and facilities developed only after the intergration of the State and

more rapidly and adequately only after the erstwhile State merged with Himachal Pradesh. This was in keeping with the development in all other fields. Up-to-date picture and statistical data have already been given in the foregoing pages.

#### **Private hospitals and nursing homes**

There are no private hospitals or nursing homes in the district. In fact there is no need for these as the free medical aid is available to the people in the Government institutions. People are poor and would not be able to afford treatment of private institutions if there were any.

However, some private practitioners in Allopathy, Ayurvedic, Unani and Homoeopathy are there to provide succour to the people. The villages too have *vaid*s and *hakims*, some qualified others experienced to practise and in some cases they are doing a good job. Apart from these we have the faith in deities and saints, living or dead to whom the ailing public still runs. In the villages, as elsewhere, faith plays a great part and even treatment in an up-to-date modern hospital is supplemented by performance of some worship, and reading of scriptures, propitiation of evil stars and the modern medicine go hand in hand with the past beliefs and faith cures. Scientific analysis of some ayurvedic modes of treatment is now seriously being undertaken and before long we will have in the district a better coverage for all types of systems.

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# Chapter XVII

## OTHER SOCIAL SERVICES

### LABOUR WELFARE

Uptil the recent past the production of goods was confined to household industry and the family constituted a single cottage industry. Persons belonging to economically lower categories used to engage themselves in such works as weaving, shoe-making, black-smithy, basket-making etc. Labour was not employed except in rare cases. On agricultural side also the field work was accomplished by the individual families. Help was rendered on reciprocal basis. As such no labour was hired and no labour problem, in the sense of the term as we understand, that too in the present day economic context, existed in the erstwhile State of Bilaspur. Some bigger households engaged extra hands as domestic and farm servants. Such hands were paid in cash as well as in kind, and, generally speaking, they maintained good employee-employer relations. To-day also such employees are scattered throughout the district.

With the ushering in of the machine age, the household industry lost its ground and, like elsewhere, in Bilaspur district also, industrial units started springing up. There are numerous small scale industries in the district which have already been described *in extenso* in Chapter V of this volume.

In all there are fifteen industrial units in the district out of which the Left Bank Power House at Bhakra Dam is the largest single unit giving employment to about four hundred persons. Next to these come the Himachal Road Transport Corporation Workshop Bilaspur, Rosin and Turpentine Factory (a Government undertaking) Bilaspur, Bhakra Workshop, Bhakra, Electrical Repair Shop, Bhakra, Auto Repair Shop, Bhakra and Carpentry Shop, Olinda (Bhakra).

In the wake of the modern development era, many new industries are coming up and as such the welfare of labour has caught the Government's attention. For the protection of industrial employees, the following Acts have been enforced in the district.

- (i) *the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947.*
- (ii) *the Minimum Wages Act, 1948.*

- (iii) *the Payment of Wages Act, 1936.*
- (iv) *the Factories Act, 1948.*
- (v) *the Trade Unions Act, 1926.*
- (vi) *the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923.*
- (vii) *the Industrial Employment (Standing Order) Act, 1946.*
- (viii) *the Payment of Bonus Act, 1965.*
- (ix) *the Motor Transport Workers Act, 1961.*
- (x) *the Maternity Benefit Act, 1961.*
- (xi) *the H. P. Shops and Commercial Establishments Act, 1969.*
- (xii) *the H. P. Industrial Establishment (National and Festival Holidays and Casual and sick leave) Act, 1969.*
- (xiii) *the Indian Boiler Act, 1923.*
- (xiv) *the Payment of Gratuity Act, 1972.*
- (xv) *the Contract Labour (Regulation & Abolition) Act, 1970.*

There are some labour and trade unions also functioning in the district, the largest being the General Mazdoor Union, Bilaspur with a membership of about 450 persons. Next comes the Rosin and Turpentine Factory Workers Union, Bilaspur with a membership of 162 employees followed by the Municipal Employees Union, Bilaspur which has a membership of 56 employees. The other registered unions are the Himachal Pradesh Road Transport Corporation (Bilaspur Region) Employees Union, Bilaspur, *Swasthya Vibhag Karamchhari Sangh*, Bilaspur; Mining Project *Karamchhari Sangh*, Bilaspur and Parvati Project *Karamchhari Sangh*, Bilaspur.

All these unions look after the interests of the employees and help maintain industrial harmony in the district. The Himachal Pradesh Government has also a full fledged Department of Labour under the charge of the Labour Commissioner, assisted by a Deputy Labour Commissioner. The whole of the territory of the State has been divided into two zones with headquarters at Mandi and Solon. Bilaspur District is controlled by the Labour Officer, Solon and a Labour Inspector looks after the labour circle comprising Hamirpur and Bilaspur districts. The departmental machinery is responsible for maintaining industrial peace by providing guidelines for expeditious settlement of disputes between the managements and the

employees and for the proper enforcement of labour laws. The District Employment Officer, Bilaspur has been entrusted the duties of the Conciliation Officer also under the *Industrial Disputes Act, 1947*; the Sub Divisional Magistrates have been delegated the functions of the Authority under the *Payment of Wages Act, 1936* and the *Minimum Wages Act, 1948* and those of the Commissioner for compensation under the *Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923*.

Besides the employees of the industrial units, workers of the commercial establishments (shops) are also well protected by these laws. There were 270 commercial establishments at Bilaspur, 83 at Ghamarwin and 4 at Shri Naina Devi Ji giving employment to 63, 25 and 3 persons respectively.

### PROHIBITION

In the year 1939 the erstwhile State created a separate Department of Excise for better control, manufacture and sale of excisable articles especially spirit, opium and *charas*. There were distilleries at Berighat and Naina Devi and the consumption of alcohol was gaining popularity. The then regime, keeping a strict watch on the consumption of alcohol and other intoxicants, experienced the fact that the people were falling in the bad habit of alcohol consumption beyond the limits of recreation and the economic conditions of the people were also deteriorating. Therefore, in the year 1942 the State Government introduced the *Bilaspur State Prohibition Act, 1942*, and ordered complete prohibition in the State. This was done at the cost of considerable revenue loss which had crossed Rs. 15,000 mark annually.

After merger the prohibition continued in the Bilaspur district till 1970 when the Government decided to lift it. This was necessitated due to the increasing incidence of illicit distillation and clandestine sale and consumption of the spirit which was proving hazardous to the public health. This on the one hand was deteriorating the health of habitual consumers and on the other creating law and order problem for the police. The real aim of prohibition was to keep the people away from the consumption of intoxicants but due to increasing indulgence by the people the policy was reviewed with a view to provide properly manufactured beer and spirits to the consumers. From April, 1970 the district ceased to be dry. The following statistics will reveal the consumption of liquor and income from excise.

| Excise shops                       | 1970-71 | 71-72 | 72-73 | 73-74 | 74-75 |
|------------------------------------|---------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. L-2 shops (English wine).       | 3       | 5     | 5     | 5     | 5     |
| 2. L-14 country liquor.            | 3       | 11    | 11    | 11    | 12    |
| 3. L-10 beer bar.                  | —       | 1     | 1     | 1     | 1     |
| 4. L-15 whole sale country liquor. | —       | 1     | 1     | 1     | 1     |
| 5. L-1 Whole sale IMFS I beer.     | —       | —     | —     | 1     | 1     |
| 6. L-3, 4 & 5 bars.                | —       | 1     | 1     | 2     | 2     |
| 7. L-17 denatured spirit.          | 3       | 3     | 3     | 3     | 3     |

## Auction money/licence fee of excise vends

|                                   |               |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| 1970-71                           | Rs. 4,27,100  |
| 1971-72                           | Rs. 6,60,100  |
| 1972-73                           | Rs. 8,65,400  |
| 1973-74                           | Rs. 9,44,200  |
| 1974-75<br>(up to December, 1974) | Rs. 13,66,500 |

## Consumption of country liquor/IMFS/beer

|                          | 1970-71 | 1971-72 | 1972-73 | 1973-74 | 1974-75<br>(up to Dec.<br>1974) |
|--------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------------------------------|
| (a) Country spirit (PLs) | 15,986  | 40,798  | 41,571  | 48,516  | 40,323                          |
| (b) IMFS (PLs)           | 5,641   | 8,750   | 7,637   | 7,069   | 9,587                           |
| (c) Beer (BLs)           | 11,341  | 19,348  | 13,496  | 13,120  | 33,417                          |

There are some opium addicts also who are issued with some quantity of opium every year on medical grounds. The following table denotes the consumption of opium in the district :—

|         | Grams |
|---------|-------|
| 1969-70 | 1,730 |
| 1970-71 | 1,290 |
| 1971-72 | 1,248 |
| 1972-73 | 1,534 |
| 1973-74 | 877   |

The Department of Excise and Taxation, Himachal Pradesh, maintains a network of Inspectors who are guided by the Excise & Taxation Officer, for the enforcement of excise laws in the district.

### ADVANCEMENT OF BACKWARD CLASSES

During the princely regime nothing seems to have been done for the amelioration of the economic conditions of the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. The age-old vice of untouchability was strictly practised and the *harijans* were looked down upon. This section of society had either no landed property or if they had, that too was usually insufficient for the family to survive upon. Therefore such people were engaged in the service of upper classes and lived in poor conditions.

With the appearance of Mahatama Gandhi on the National scene, the scheduled castes and tribes found their Messiah. By the time India gained Independence the voice of Mahatama Gandhi, condemning the practice of untouchability had reached the remotest corners of India. Persons belonging to these sections became conscious and a great urge to rise and be equal with the others, swept the country.

*The Constitution* provides for the removal of untouchability. Schemes were envisaged for the uplift of *harijans* (scheduled castes) and *adim jatis* (scheduled tribes). *The Untouchability Act* was promulgated in 1955. As elsewhere in the Pradesh, in this district also various schemes were started for the benefit of these classes.

The scheduled castes, that are found in the district are, Balmiki, Chura or Bhangi, Bangali, Banjara, Barad, Chamar, Mochi, Ramdassi, Ravidassi, Chhimbe (Dhobi), Dagi, Daole, Dhaki or Toori, Doom or Doomna,



Hesi, Julahe, Kabirpanthi, Lohar, Keer, Khatik, Sarhede, Barde, Siryare and Teli. Out of total population of 1,58,806 (1961 census) 38,331 persons belonged to scheduled castes, and according to 1971 census out of the gross population of 1,94,786, the scheduled castes number 47,655. As such about one-fourth of the total population is *harijan*.

The scheduled tribes also inhabit the area, although the district is not a tribal one. The scheduled tribes that live within the limits of the district are Gaddi, Gujar, Jad, Lamba, Khampa, Bodh, Bhot and Kanayra. In 1961 there were 4,213 persons belonging to scheduled tribes and according to 1971 census the figure rose to 5,236.

With the commencement of planned development, Central and State Governments started a liberal programme for the advancement of scheduled castes and tribes. Various schemes including advancing of house loans and subsidies, legal assistance, construction of drinking water wells, stipends to *harijan* and *adim jati* students, distribution of implements, sewing machines etc. were started and a glimpse of the activities of the Welfare Department from the commencement of First Plan to 1972-73 can be had from the sub-joined two tables.

TABLE I

| Name of the scheme                                      | Financial targets achieved during |                       |
|---|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
|   | First Five Year Plan              | Second Five Year Plan |
| 1   | 2                                 | 3                     |
| <b>1. Economic uplift</b>                               | <b>Rupees</b>                     | <b>Rupees</b>         |
| (i) Linking of roads.                                   | 1,900                             | 5,155                 |
| (ii) Training-cum-production centres.                   | —                                 | —                     |
| <b>2. Health, housing and others</b>                    |                                   |                       |
| (i) Sanitation and drainage in <i>harijan</i> colonies. | —                                 | 3,650                 |
| (ii) Drinking water supply ( <i>bowlis</i> )            | 1,700                             | 800                   |

|  |       |          |
|--|-------|----------|
| (iii) Construction of <i>bowlls</i>                      | —     | 4,600    |
| <b>3. Drinking water supply</b>                          |       |          |
| <b>Schemes</b>   | —     | 7,600    |
| <b>4. Education</b>                                      |       |          |
| Award of scholarships, stipends and stationery etc.      | —     | 42,800   |
| <b>5. Agriculture</b>                                    |       |          |
| (i) Distribution of plants and seeds.                    | —     | 9,000    |
| (ii) Water supply schemes.                               | —     | 1,13,000 |
| (iii) Purchase of agricultural land and building sites.  | —     | 16,000   |
| (iv) Distribution of agricultural implements.            | —     | 52,000   |
| <b>6. Co-operation</b>                                   |       |          |
| Subsidy to multipurpose societies                        | —     | 2,300    |
| <b>7. Cottage industries</b>                             |       |          |
| (i) Training in weaving and spinning                     | —     | 3,400    |
| (ii) Subsidy for rehabilitation of trainees.             | —     | 3,000    |
| (iii) Purchase of spinning wheels and looms.             | 300   | 4,900    |
| (iv) Sewing machines.                                    | —     | 3,400    |
| <b>8. Communication</b>                                  |       |          |
| Linking of inaccessible places with main roads.          | 1,900 | 5,400    |
| <b>9. Health and housing</b>                             |       |          |
| (i) Supply of medicines to the district medical officer. | —     | 1,500    |

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|                            |   |   |        |
|----------------------------|---|---|--------|
| (ii)                       | Training in medical profession.   | — | 2,300  |
| (iii)                      | Improvement of sanitation in<br><i>harijan</i> colonies.  | — | 6,500  |
| (iv)                       | Subsidy for construction and<br>repair of houses.   | — | 66,700 |
| <b>10. Publicity</b>       |   |   |        |
|                            | Community sets, aid to voluntary<br>agencies etc.   | — | 6,000  |
| <b>11. Economic uplift</b> |   |   |        |
| (i)                        | Stipend for training in spinning<br>and weaving.  | — | 7,400  |
| (ii)                       | Free distribution of sewing<br>machines, handlooms & other<br>equipment for cottage industries. | — | 14,900 |

TABLE

Financial achievements under different schemes for the welfare of scheduled

| S. No.                             | Name of scheme   | 1962-63      |
|------------------------------------|--|--------------|
| 1                                  |  | 2            |
| <b>Welfare of scheduled castes</b> |  |              |
| 1.                                 | Award of scholarships.   | 5000         |
| 2.                                 | Books and slates.  | 3000         |
| 3.                                 | Follow up programme.   | 3800         |
| 4.                                 | Fruit plants distributed on subsidised rates.                                  | 4300         |
| 5.                                 | Housing subsidy to scheduled castes, engaged in unclean occupation.            | 18000        |
| 6.                                 | Housing sites for scheduled castes.  | 4500         |
| 7.                                 | Schemes for the elimination of the carrying of night soil.                     | 300          |
| 8.                                 | Awards to panchayats.  | 400          |
| 9.                                 | Housing subsidy for scheduled castes other than engaged in unclean occupation. | —            |
| 10.                                | Construction of workshops.   | —            |
| 11.                                | Technical stipends.  | —            |
| 12.                                | Drinking water supply schemes.   | —            |
| <b>Total :</b>                     |  | <b>39300</b> |
| 13.                                | <b>Welfare of scheduled tribes</b>   | —            |
| 14.                                | <b>Welfare of other backward classes</b>                                       | —            |
| 15.                                | <b>Social welfare programme</b>  | —            |
| <b>Grand Total :</b>               |  | <b>39300</b> |

## II

castes, scheduled tribes and other backward classes in Bilaspur district.

| Amount spent during the year |         |         | (in rupees) |
|------------------------------|---------|---------|-------------|
| 1963-64                      | 1964-65 | 1965-66 | 1966-67     |
| 3                            | 4       | 5       | 6           |
| 3940                         | 3000    | 2000    | —           |
| 2475                         | 3000    | 2000    | —           |
| 2200                         | 1700    | 1200    | —           |
| 3200                         | 5000    | 4 00    | —           |
| —                            | 13950   | —       | 31079       |
| 4000                         | 6600    | —       | —           |
| 1500                         | —       | —       | —           |
| —                            | —       | —       | —           |
| 5250                         | 13500   | 27850   | 950         |
| 10000                        | 2250    | —       | —           |
| —                            | —       | —       | 6247        |
| —                            | —       | —       | —           |
| 32565                        | 49000   | 37650   | 38276       |
| —                            | —       | —       | —           |
| —                            | —       | —       | —           |
| —                            | —       | —       | —           |
| 32565                        | 49000   | 37650   | 38276       |

| 1967-68 |       | 1968-69 | 1969-70 |
|---------|-------|---------|---------|
| 7       | 8     | 9       | 10      |
| 1.      | 5800  | 6270    | 18900   |
| 2.      | 4500  | —       | —       |
| 3.      | 600   | —       | 600     |
| 4.      | —     | —       | —       |
| 5.      | —     | —       | 10500   |
| 6.      | —     | —       | —       |
| 7.      | —     | —       | —       |
| 8.      | —     | —       | —       |
| 9.      | 19250 | 9800    | 9900    |
| 10.     | —     | —       | —       |
| 11.     | —     | 3630    | 6030    |
| 12.     | —     | —       | —       |
| 30150   |       | 19700   | 45930   |
| 13.     | —     | —       | —       |
| 14.     | —     | —       | —       |
| 15.     | —     | —       | —       |
| 30150   |       | 19700   | 45930   |

| 1970-71 | 1971-72 | 1972-73 |
|---------|---------|---------|
| 11      | 12      | 13      |
| 20100   | 35030   | 77500   |
| —       | —       | —       |
| 480     | 1500    | 4400    |
| —       | —       | —       |
| 9000    | 10900   | 8700    |
| 600     | 600     | 600     |
| 1163    | —       | —       |
| —       | —       | —       |
| 13500   | 13700   | 38800   |
| —       | —       | —       |
| 6700    | 5895    | 5972    |
| —       | 2800    | 4700    |
| 52143   | 70425   | 140672  |
| 2700    | 3500    | 18920   |
| 5000    | 36000   | 20900   |
| —       | 7190    | 17400   |
| 59843   | 107115  | 197892  |

Besides, there are also functioning ten *Mahila Mandal* Craft-cum-*Balwadi Kendras* at Diara sector Bilaspur, Lakhanpur, Chandpur, Kasol in Bilaspur Sadar tahsil and Aur, Naswal, Masaur, Luharwin and Bhagatpur in Ghamarwin tahsil and one *Balwadi* at Rohin through the State Social Welfare Advisory Board, Himachal Pradesh and one craft centre at Jhandutta through *Harijan and Adim Jati Sevak Sangh*, H. P., out of the funds provided by the Department of Welfare, Himachal Pradesh.

# **Chapter XVIII**

## **PUBLIC LIFE AND VOLUNTARY SOCIAL SERVICE ORGANISATIONS**

### **Representation in the State and the Union Legislature**

Strictly speaking, participation of the people of this district in the administration was almost a new thing for the reasons that character of administrative set up during the distant past was, more or less, essentially that of a police State and the police constable was a link between the raja and the common man. He was the collecting agency for information required by the ruler at the headquarters. However, as has been said in Chapter XIV, some Pargana Committees and a Central Education and Health Committee, with an element of public representation, later came into existence. The erstwhile Bilaspur State did not form part of any union or federation and, therefore, question of its representation in such a body did not ever arise.

After the attainment of Independence by the country, negotiations were held with the Government of India culminating in the accession agreement of 15th August, 1948, under which the raja handed over the administration to the Government of India, who on their part agreed to administer it as a separate unit. For purposes of administration the Bilaspur State was one of the part 'C' States under the Indian Constitution. It was administered by the President, acting through a Chief Commissioner appointed by him.

### **First general election for Legislative Assembly**

As has already been mentioned, Bilaspur being a part 'C' State, governed by a Chief Commissioner, had no Legislative Assembly within the State till its merger, in 1954, with Himachal Pradesh. After merger the first general elections to the Legislative Assembly, so far as this district is concerned, were conducted in May, 1955. There were four constituencies namely Bilaspur, Kot Kahlur, Gherwin and Ghamarwin (double-member constituency), from which five representatives were to be returned to the Himachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly. Out of the total population of 1,26,099 (1951 census) as many as 71,762 voters exercised the right of



franchise. Of the total 71,762 votes 40,972 valid votes were polled forming a percentage of about 57. The Indian National Congress, the *Praja* Socialist party and Independent candidates contested these elections. All the Independent candidates, enjoying the support of the erstwhile ruler of Bilaspur State, carried the day defeating all the rival candidates. Subsequently, however, in a bye-election held in October, 1955, a Congress candidate captured a seat defeating other candidates. The percentage of total number of valid votes polled, on the total number of votes, reveals that the polling at the Gherwin constituency was the maximum constituting a percentage of 63.27 and the minimum at the Ghamarwin (double-member) constituency forming a percentage of 51.58. The following table illustrates the detailed position of the elections.



| Name of constituency                                | No. of seats | No. of candidates |                 | No. of electors | Votes polled | No. of valid votes polled |
|---|--------------|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|---------------------------|
|   |              | Total             | Conte-<br>sting |                 |              |                           |
| 1   | 2            | 3                 | 4               | 5               | 6            | 7                         |
| Bilaspur  | 1            | 4                 | 4               | 13,754          | 7,525        | 7,204                     |
| Kot Kahlur  | 1            | 3                 | 3               | 13,949          | 8,697        | 8,683                     |
| Gherwin   | 1            | 3                 | 3               | 15,922          | 10,137       | 10,074                    |
| Ghamarwin<br>(double mem-<br>ber consti-<br>tuency) | 2            | 6                 | 6               | 28,137          | 14,613       | 13,775                    |
| *Ghamarwin  | 1            | 3                 | 3               | 28,137          | 13,047       | 13,047                    |

\*Bye-election was conducted for the vacant seat.

| No. of<br>invalid<br>votes | Percentage<br>of valid<br>votes to<br>total votes | Names of<br>contesting<br>parties | No. of<br>votes<br>polled by<br>each con-<br>testant | Percent-<br>age of<br>polled<br>votes | Name of<br>successful<br>party |
|----------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 8                          | 9   | 10                                | 11   | 12                                    | 13                             |
| 381                        | 52.39   | Independent                       | 5,170  | 71                                    | Independent                    |
|                            |   | P. S. P.                          | 597  | 9                                     |                                |
|                            |   | Independent                       | 212  | 3                                     |                                |
|                            |   | Congress                          | 1,225  | 17                                    |                                |
| 14                         | 62.25   | Independent                       | 7,369  | 85                                    | Independent                    |
|                            |   | Congress                          | 954  | 11                                    |                                |
|                            |   | P. S. P.                          | 360  | 4                                     |                                |
| 63                         | 63.27   | Independent                       | 8,292  | 82                                    | Independent                    |
|                            |   | Congress                          | 1,388  | 14                                    |                                |
|                            |   | P. S. P.                          | 394  | 4                                     |                                |
| 838                        | 51.58   | Independent                       | 10,111   | 37                                    | Independent                    |
|                            |   | Independent                       | 9,278  | 34                                    | Independent                    |
|                            |   | Congress                          | 3,966  | 14                                    |                                |
|                            |   | Congress                          | 1,061  | 4                                     |                                |
|                            |   | P. S. P.                          | 2,511  | 9                                     |                                |
|                            |   | P. S. P.                          | 624  | 2                                     |                                |
| —                          | 46.40   | Congress                          | 6,885  | 52                                    | Congress                       |
|                            |   | Independent                       | 5,842  | 45                                    |                                |
|                            |   | Independent                       | 320  | 3                                     |                                |

### Lok Sabha elections (1951-52)

As regards the elections to the House of People (*Lok Sabha*) held in October, 1951 only one seat fell to the share of Bilaspur part 'C' State. As many as 68,130 electors were to exercise the right of franchise. Initially there were four candidates who filed their nomination papers, later on three of them withdrew their candidatures in favour of Independent candidate, and thus polling did not take place, and he being the only candidate left in the field, was returned unopposed.

### Territorial Council

The term of office of the members, elected for the Himachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly had not expired when a major change in political set up took place, due, mainly to the *States Re-organisation Act, 1956*, by virtue of which the Himachal Pradesh ceased to be a part 'C' State, and was converted into a Union Territory with effect from November 1, 1956. As a consequence the State Legislature was terminated and instead the Territorial Council came into being.

### Second general elections (1957)

During the year ending the 31st December, 1957, First General Elections to the Territorial Council of Himachal Pradesh and Second General Elections to the *Lok Sabha* were conducted.

### Delimitation of constituencies

The Union Territory of Himachal Pradesh was delimited for the purpose of elections to the House of People under the *Delimitation of Parliamentary and Assembly Constituencies Order, 1956*, and, the Bilaspur district formed a part of the single-member constituency, namely the Mandi constituency. It included the entire Bilaspur district, Sundernagar and Chachiot tahsils and Samela, Nagrota, Kot, Baldwara, Batchatta, Bharnal and Paonta 'Patwar' circles in Gopalpur *kanungo* circle in tahsil Sarkaghat and tahsil Sadar Mandi district.

Under the *Delimitation of Council Constituencies (Himachal Pradesh) Order, 1956*, Bilaspur district was divided into two double-member and one single-member Territorial Council constituencies with a total number of five seats. Ghamarwin and Gherwin were double-member constituencies and Bilaspur was a single-member constituency.

Due to hilly terrain this Pradesh remained snowbound. Therefore, the election programme had to be chalked out separately for the hilly areas of this Pradesh. Accordingly the Election Commission extended the date before which the election for Mandi Parliamentary Constituency was to be completed. The dates of poll were fixed between the 24th to 31st May, and 1st June to 7th June, 1957.

### **Territorial Council elections**

The dates for the conduct of elections to the Territorial Council, during the second general elections were fixed as follows. Elections in the Gherwin double-member constituency took place on the 25th and 28th May, 1957; in the Bilaspur single-member constituency on the 29th May, 1957 and in the Ghamarwin double-member constituency on the 31st May, and 1st June, 1957. After ensuring adequate security arrangements, elections were conducted as scheduled. There were no untoward incidents and the entire election phase passed peacefully.

The following table gives a vivid picture of the results of the elections to the Territorial Council.

| Name of constituency | No. of seats | No. of candidates contesting | No. of electors | Votes polled | No. of valid votes polled | No. of invalid votes |
|----------------------|--------------|------------------------------|-----------------|--------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| 1                    | 2            | 3                            | 4               | 5            | 6                         | 7                    |
| Ghamarwin            | 2            | 5                            | 29,269          | 31,196       | 30,567                    | 629                  |
| Gherwin              | 2            | 5                            | 30,764          | 32,427       | 31,825                    | 602                  |
| Bilaspur             | 1            | 2                            | 14,210          | 7,919        | 7,917                     | 2                    |

| Percentage<br>of valid votes<br>to total votes | Names of<br>contesting<br>parties | No. of<br>votes polled<br>by each<br>contestant | Perce-<br>tage of<br>polled<br>votes | Name of<br>successful<br>party |
|--|-----------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 8  | 9                                 | 10  | 11                                   | 12                             |
| 52   | Congress                          | (2)   | 5,090<br>5,324<br>1,416              |                                |
|  | Independent                       | (3)   | 10,700<br>8,037                      | Independents(2)                |
| 51   | Congress                          | (2)   | 4,744<br>5,585<br>942                |                                |
|  | Independent                       | (3)   | 10,040<br>10,514                     | Independents(2)                |
| 56   | Congress                          |   | 2,260                                |                                |
|  | Independent                       |   | 5,657                                | Independent                    |

**Lok Sabha elections (1957)**

There were two contesting candidates. Total number of votes in the Mandi Parliamentary constituency was 1,80,037 out of which 90,640 valid votes were polled constituting 50 per cent of the total number of votes. The largest number of votes viz. 63 per cent of the votes polled went to the successful Congress candidate. The table given below indicates the picture of elections to the *Lok Sabha*.

|   |                         |
|---|-------------------------|
| No. of electors.  | 1,80,037                |
| Total number of valid votes polled.                       | 90,640                  |
| Percentage of valid votes.                                | 50                      |
| Party affiliation of constesting candidates.              | Congress<br>Independent |
| Number of valid votes polled in favour of each candidate. | 57,630<br>33,010        |
| Percentage of votes polled in favour of each candidate.   | 63<br>37                |
| Name of successful party.                                 | Congress                |

**Rajya Sabha**

Prior to July 1, 1954, i.e. the merger of Bilaspur with Himachal Pradesh, the Bilaspur part 'C' State had no seat at all in the *Rajya Sabha*. The area was being represented by the representative of Himachal Pradesh. In 1958, only one seat fell to the share of Himachal Pradesh and as such the district did not play any part, by itself, directly in this election. But the district figured prominently in this election for producing a successful candidate. Raja of erstwhile Bilaspur State, an Independent candidate was declared elected by the electoral college formed of the members of the Territorial Council of Himachal Pradesh, defeating his Congress rival.

**Third general elections (1962)**

The third general elections were held for the Territorial Council and, in Bilaspur district were conducted on April 27th and 29th, 1962. Five constituencies namely, Ghamarwin, Ajmerpur, Gherwin, Kot Kahlur and



Bilaspur<sup>2</sup> were formed under the *Delimitation of Territorial Council Constituencies Himachal Pradesh Order, 1962*. The Ghamarwin and Gherwin constituencies were reserved for the scheduled castes. The Congress, the *Swatantra*, the *Praja Socialist* and the *Jan Sangh* parties sponsored their candidates, besides the Independents. Three seats out of five were bagged by the Congress candidates and the remaining two went to the *Swatantra* Party. The percentage of total number of valid votes polled on the total number of votes, reveals that the maximum polling was of the order of 39.09 per cent in Ajmerpur constituency and the minimum of the order of 34.09 per cent in the Bilaspur constituency. The following table gives a detailed account of the election results to the Territorial Council.



| Name of constituency. | No. of seats. | No. of candidates contesting. | No. of electors. | No. of votes polled. | Percentage of valid votes to total votes. |
|-----------------------|---------------|-------------------------------|------------------|----------------------|---|
| 1                     | 2             | 3                             | 4                | 5                    | 6   |
| Gherwin (S. C.)       | 1             | 4                             | 17,427           | 6,038                | 34.64                                     |
| Ajmerpur              | 1             | 4                             | 16,501           | 6,451                | 39.09                                     |
| Ghamarwin (S. C.)     | 1             | 4                             | 17,988           | 6,983                | 38.82                                     |
| Bilaspur              | 1             | 6                             | 15,724           | 5,361                | 34.09                                     |
| Kot Kahlur            | 1             | 5                             | 15,741           | 5,435                | 35.25                                     |

| Names of<br>contesting<br>parties. | No. of<br>votes<br>polled<br>by each<br>contestant. | Percentage<br>of<br>polled<br>votes. | Name of<br>successful<br>party. |
|------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 7                                  | 8   | 9                                    | 10                              |
| Congress                           | 3,391   | 56.16                                | Congress                        |
| <i>Swatantra</i>                   | 1,987   | 32.09                                |                                 |
| <i>Jan Sangh</i>                   | 288   | 4.76                                 |                                 |
| Independent                        | 372   | 6.16                                 |                                 |
| Congress                           | 3,862   | 59.86                                | Congress                        |
| <i>Swatantra</i>                   | 1,952   | 30.25                                |                                 |
| <i>Jan Sangh</i>                   | 127   | 1.96                                 |                                 |
| Independent                        | 510   | 7.90                                 |                                 |
| Congress                           | 3,665   | 52.48                                | Congress                        |
| <i>Swatantra</i>                   | 2,880   | 41.24                                |                                 |
| <i>Jan Sangh</i>                   | 267   | 3.82                                 |                                 |
| Independent                        | 171   | 2.44                                 |                                 |
| <i>Swatantra</i>                   | 2,562   | 47.48                                | <i>Swatantra</i>                |
| Congress                           | 2,123   | 39.06                                |                                 |
| <i>Jan Sangh</i>                   | 227   | 4.23                                 |                                 |
| <i>Praja Socialist</i>             | 129   | 2.40                                 |                                 |
| Independents (2)                   | 250   | 4.66                                 |                                 |
|                                    | 70  | 1.03                                 |                                 |
| <i>Swatantra</i>                   | 2,158   | 39.70                                | <i>Swatantra</i>                |
| Congress                           | 2,070   | 38.08                                |                                 |
| <i>Jan Sangh</i>                   | 227   | 4.08                                 |                                 |
| <i>Praja Socialist</i>             | 411   | 7.56                                 |                                 |
| Independent                        | 574   | 10.55                                |                                 |

**Lok Sabha**

The third general elections to the *Lok Sabha* were conducted simultaneously with the Territorial Council elections on 27th and 28th April, 1962. This district for the purpose of elections to the *Lok Sabha* was tagged with Mandi Parliamentary constituency. The Congress, the *Swatantra*, the *Jan Sangh* and the Independent candidates contested the elections. Out of total electorate of 1,93,127, only 76,787 votes were polled of which 3,073 votes were declared invalid. The Congress candidate secured 46,856 votes, defeating the rival contestants by an overwhelming majority.

**Rajya Sabha**

Himachal Pradesh having two seats in the *Rajya Sabha* still continued to be represented by Congress and Independent candidates.

**Fourth general election (1967)**

As result of the re-organisation of Punjab during November, 1966 and subsequent merger of hilly areas of Kangra, Kulu, Lahul-Spiti and Simla Districts with Himachal Pradesh the number of constituencies to the Pradesh Assembly was raised. As per recommendations of the Delimitation Commission the district was divided into three Assembly constituencies namely Bilaspur, Gherwin (reserved for scheduled castes) and Ghamarwin, as against five Assembly constituencies in the third general elections of 1962. The general elections in Bilaspur district were conducted on 21st February, 1967. Congress, the *Swatantra*, the Socialist, the *Jan Sangh*, and the Communist parties sponsored their candidates, besides the Independents. All the three seats were bagged by the Congress candidates. The percentage of number of valid votes polled against the total number of votes, reveals that the maximum polling was of the order of 51.88 per cent in Bilaspur constituency and the minimum of the order of 47.07 per cent in Gherwin constituency. The following table depicts the election results to the State Legislature.

| Name of constituency.   | No. of seats. | No. of Candi- dates contest- ing. | No. of electors. | No. of valid votes polled. | Percentage of valid votes to total votes. | Names of contesting parties.  | No. of votes polled by each con- test- ant.  | Percentage of polled votes.                    | Name of successful party. |
|-------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|----------------------------|---|---|--|--|---------------------------|
| 1                       | 2             | 3                                 | 4                | 5                          | 6   | 7   | 8  | 9  | 10                        |
| Bilaspur<br>(18)        | 1             | 6                                 | 29,859           | 14,452                     | 48.39                                     | Congress<br><i>Swatantra</i><br><i>Samyukta</i><br>Socialist<br>Independents(3) | 6,815<br>5,157<br>679                        | 47.16<br>36.68<br>4.69                         | Congress                  |
| Gherwin (S. C.)<br>(19) | 1             | 6                                 | 29,760           | 12,876                     | 43.28                                     | Congress<br>Communist (M)<br><i>Jan Sangh</i><br>Independents(3)                | 6,085<br>448<br>4,043<br>506<br>1,157<br>637 | 47.16<br>3.48<br>31.39<br>3.93<br>8.99<br>4.95 | Congress                  |

| 1         | 2 | 3 | 4      | 5      | 6     | 7               | 8     | 9     | 10       |
|-----------|---|---|--------|--------|-------|-----------------|-------|-------|----------|
| Ghamarwin | 1 | 4 | 29,907 | 13,278 | 44.40 | Congress        | 6,090 | 45.86 | Congress |
| (20)      |   |   |        |        |       | Jan Sangh       | 5,623 | 42.35 |          |
|           |   |   |        |        |       | Independents(2) | 149   | 1.12  |          |
|           |   |   |        |        |       |                 | 1,416 | 10.65 |          |

**Lok Sabha elections (1967)**

For the purpose of election to the *Lok Sabha* during the fourth general elections, the Bilaspur district was tggged with the Kangra district. The election took place in the month of February. There were only two candidates in the field, one from Congress and other from *Bhartiya Jan Sangh* party. Out of the total number of 2,79,659 electors, only 1,42,167 valid votes were polled out of which the Congress candidate securing as many as 72,705 votes, constituting a percentage of 51 to the total number of valid votes polled, was declared elected.

In the Rajya Sabha the district is represented by the members elected from the entire Pradesh.

**Mid-term poll to the Lok Sabha**

Consequent upon the dissolution of the fourth *Lok Sabha*, mid-term polls took place in the month of March, 1971 to elect representatives to the new (fifth) *Lok Sabha*. Himachal Pradesh had already witnessed a political change in January, when it was elevated to become the eighteenth State of the Indian Union. Though the achievement of statehood fulfilled the long cherished desires of the people but they had to remain contented with a reduced representation for the *Lok Sabha*, which was curtailed from six to four. In the delimitation of constituencies this time Bilaspur formed part of Hamirpur Parliamentary constituency.

As many as five candidates belonging to Congress (J), Congress (N), *Bhartiya Jan Sang* and two Independents, contested the election. Congress (J) candidate, who secured 1,53,937 votes constituting a percentage of 78 to the total number of valid votes (1,97,189), was declared elected.

**Fifth general elections (1972)**

The entire State was divided into 68 territorial constituencies for the purpose of elections to the Legislative Assembly of the Pradesh for the fifth general elections. This district was split up into four constituencies namely, Kot Kahlur, Bilaspur, Gherwin (scheduled caste) and Ghamarwin. Polling took place on 5th March, 1972. The following table indicates the position of the elections.

| Name of constituency.   | No. of seats. | No. of candidates contesting. | No. of electors. | No. of valid votes polled. | Percentage of valid votes to total votes. |
|-------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------|------------------|----------------------------|---|
| 1                       | 2             | 3                             | 4                | 5                          | 6   |
| Kot Kahlur<br>(20)      | 1             | 6                             | 21,423           | 10,562                     | 49.24                                     |
| Bilaspur<br>(21)        | 1             | 9                             | 25,932           | 10,855                     | 41.84                                     |
| Gherwin (S. C.)<br>(22) | 1             | 3                             | 24,864           | 9,418                      | 39.51                                     |
| Ghamarwin<br>(23)       | 1             | 5                             | 28,405           | 12,791                     | 45.04                                     |



| Names of<br>contesting<br>parties | No. of votes<br>polled by<br>each contest-<br>ant. | Percentage<br>of polled<br>votes. | Name of<br>success-<br>ful party. |
|-----------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 7                                 | 8  | 9                                 | 10                                |
| Congress                          | 5,329  | 47.61                             | Congress                          |
| Jan Sangh                         | 74   | 0.70                              |                                   |
| Independent (3)                   | 4,334  | 41.03                             |                                   |
|                                   | 510  | 4.83                              |                                   |
|                                   | 368  | 3.48                              |                                   |
| Lok Raj                           | 247  | 2.34                              |                                   |
| Congress                          | 5,431  | 50.03                             | Congress                          |
| Jan Sangh                         | 477  | 4.39                              |                                   |
| Lok Raj                           | 2,477  | 22.82                             |                                   |
| Communist                         | 497  | 4.48                              |                                   |
| Independents (5)                  | 232  | 2.14                              |                                   |
|                                   | 756  | 6.96                              |                                   |
|                                   | 337  | 3.10                              |                                   |
|                                   | 564  | 5.20                              |                                   |
|                                   | 84   | 0.77                              |                                   |
| Congress                          | 4,994  | 53.02                             | Congress                          |
| Jan Sangh                         | 292  | 3.10                              |                                   |
| Lok Raj                           | 4,132  | 43.87                             |                                   |
| Congress                          | 8,370  | 65.44                             | Congress                          |
| Jan Sangh                         | 575  | 4.50                              |                                   |
| Independents (3)                  | 278  | 2.17                              |                                   |
|                                   | 301  | 3.35                              |                                   |
|                                   | 3,267  | 25.54                             |                                   |

## POLITICAL PARTIES

There are no political parties exclusive to the district. The district has also no local organisation of these parties except of the Indian National Congress. During the princely rule the impact of political movement for the firsttime was felt after the Cabinet Mission, when *praja mandals* started functioning in the rest of the princely States. Originally a secret movement gathered momentum with the advent of Independence, and the *praja mandals* got merged in the Indian National Congress. The Congress Party is the only political organisation which maintains a regular contact with the masses in the district. At the district level, a District Congress Committee is functioning with twenty-two elected members, President, Vice-President and the Secretaries. The District Congress Committee was elected in the year 1973. Besides there exist Block Congress Committees in four Congress blocks at Bilaspur, Ghamarwin, Jhandutta, and Kot. As such there is a considerable machinery of the party which on the one hand keep the people informed about the policies of the party and on the other advise the Government about the priorities of developmental works in the district. Other political parties function in the district during the elections only.

During the first and second general elections, the independent candidates, having the support of the erstwhile ruler of Bilaspur State, who had a strong hold on the local people, (though he himself lost the election for the Parliament from the Mandi Parliamentary constituency comprising whole of the Bilaspur district and the portion of Mandi district), had the larger following, while in the third general elections to the State Legislature the Congress Party improved substantially, and out of five seats the party captured three while the *Swatantra* Party bagged the remaining two. But contrary to the previous position, during the fourth and fifth *Vidhan Sabha* general elections all parties were completely wiped out by the Indian National Congress.

A cursory glance through the election result will show the popularity commanded by each party.

### Newspapers

During the State time, a weekly paper in Hindi, called Bilaspur Bulletin, was published, and was discontinued with the integration of Bilaspur State in the Indian Union in 1948. One magazine, started in 1959, is being published by the Government Degree College, Bilaspur. No other newspaper or periodical or journal is published from this district. The following table will illustrate the circulation position of various newspapers and magazines, that find entry into the district from outside,

| Type of paper/magazine | Name of paper/magazine   |
|------------------------|--|
| Daily                  | <i>The Tribune</i><br><i>The Hindustan Times</i><br><i>The Indian Express</i><br><i>Milap</i><br><i>The Times of India</i><br><i>The Nav Bharat Times</i><br><i>Vir Partap</i><br><i>Partap</i><br><i>Punjab Kesri</i><br><i>The Statesman</i><br><i>Patriot</i><br><i>The National Herald</i> |
| Weekly                 | <i>Dharm Yug</i><br><i>The Illustrated Weekly of India</i><br><i>Link</i><br><i>Blitz</i><br><i>Saptahik Hindustan</i><br><i>News Weekly</i><br><i>National Geographical Magazine</i><br><i>Shankars Weekly</i><br><i>Dinman</i>   |
| Fortnightly            | <i>Femina</i><br><i>Filmfare</i><br><i>Caravan</i><br><i>Sarita</i><br><i>Mukta</i><br><i>Madhuri</i><br><i>Youth Times</i><br><i>Bhawan's Journal</i><br><i>Indian Librarian</i><br><i>Rajpatra</i>   |

**Monthly**

*Imprint*  
*Manohar Kahaniya*  
*Sarika*  
*Niharika*  
*Science to-day*  
*Navneet*  
*Psychologist*  
*Biswin sadh*  
*Reader's Digest*  
*Encounter*  
*Maya*  
*Competition Master*  
*Kadambini*  
*Nai Kahaniyan*  
*Quest*  
*Himshiksha*  
*Sports world*  
*Himprastha*

**Children Section**


*Chandamama*  
*Champak*  
*Indra Jal*  
*Preg*  
*Nandan*  
*Diwana*

Cut of these papers and magazines, *The Tribune*, *Vir Partap* and *Partap* are in larger circulation in the area, due to the fact that the papers carry local news too. Film magazines are popular among students and young men.

**VOLUNTARY SOCIAL SERVICE ORGANISATIONS****Harijan Sewak Sangh**

This body is responsible for the implementation of policies and programmes set by the provincial *Harijan Sewak Sangh*. The principal aims of the Sangh are to eradicate untouchability and to ameliorate the social and economic conditions of the scheduled castes. To eradicate the evil of

untouchability and giving currency to this idea, the Sangh has started a Gandhi Hostel at Bilaspur where students are admitted of whom 75 per cent are scheduled castes and remaining 25 per cent others. The inmates of this hostel take their meals together, irrespective of their castes and creeds prepared by a cook belonging to the Harijan community. Apart from the facilities of boarding and lodging a cash scholarship is paid by the Sangh.

The Sangh is also running tailoring and weaving centres in the district where training in tailoring and embroidery work is imparted to the inmates of the centres. The Sangh has also started industrial centres where boys and girls are taught the craft of spinning, weaving, knitting and tailoring etc. Harijan girls learning the tailoring work were provided with sewing machines, and the Harijan boys engaged in the weaving work were provided with handlooms, so that they may carry on their work independently.

The financial resources of the Sangh mostly depend upon the grants-in-aid provided by the central and provincial *Harijan Sewak Sangh*.

# Chapter XIX

## PLACES OF INTEREST

Bilaspur, comparatively the smallest district of Himachal Pradesh, lying on both banks of the Satluj river, situated in a zone with a climate ranging from temperate to sub-tropical, experiencing rare snow falls is, notwithstanding its size and comparatively small population, full of places of interest and, therefore, worthy of a visit. It abounds in old sanctuaries and hill forts representing the hoary past on the one hand and on the other has the privilege of containing the New Township of Bilaspur as also the largest man-made lake known as the Gobind Sagar, both of which came up in the wake of the famous Bhakra Dam.

The district falls within a convenient and easy reach from the plains as well as from the hills. Three main routes lead to Bilaspur proper. Those intending to include it in their itinerary from the hills to the plains can easily take the route from Simla through an all weather metalled motorable road, namely, the Simla-Bilaspur-Mandi road and from the plains motorists can travel from Chandigarh via Rupar and Kiratpur to Bilaspur. On this route buses are also available at Chandigarh and Rupar. For those who wish to enjoy a more thrilling and exciting journey, motor launches starting from Bhakra up to Bilaspur are the matchless means of communication threading their way on the heaving bosom of Gobind Sagar. Motor launches can be hired from the Bhakra Management Board. It is a voyage of about three hours only. For motorists it is easier to drive through Nangal up to Kiratpur to join the Rupar-Bilaspur road. A more distant route from the plains is from Pathankot via Mandi to Bilaspur. This hill route is through a most picturesque tract. Buses are available from Pathankot to Mandi where a halt can be planned and again from there the Government buses carry the tourists to Bilaspur. For tourists wishing to penetrate into the district through Dharamsala, Kangra and Hamirpur the route leads to Ghamarwin and thence to Bilaspur town.

### **Bachhretu Fort in Tahsil Ghamarwin**

The top of a hill near the hamlet of Bachhretu, three kilometres upwards from Changar Talai, and about thirty-four kilometres from Ghamarwin on Ghamarwin-Bhakra motorable road, is marked by the site of what was once a fort but now is no more than a ruined and deserted place with only scattered

relics of the said building. The site commands a magnificent and sweeping view of Gobind Sagar and the surrounding hills. The fort was constructed<sup>1</sup> by Raja Ratan Chand of Bilaspur who ruled from 1355 to 1406. Obviously the relics are as old as about five hundred and fifty years, and indicate that the stronghold was of a rectangular shape, the longer arms about hundred metres and the shorter about fifty metres, built of hammer-dressed stones. From the portions of the enclosing walls, still existing here and there, it can be assumed to have been about twenty metres in height. The thickness of its walls must have been one metre tapering towards the top. The space inside was, perhaps, divided into numerous room-shaped compartments out of which about fifteen can be traced even now. Walls of one of the rooms are exceedingly high, measuring about ten to twelve metres. Sills still standing on the doors of these rooms are made of long slabs of stones. The two underground apartments made of hammer dressed stones, now almost buried under the debris were apparently meant for storing grains for the garrison. A water tank is also said to have existed. A very interesting small temple, housing two busts of the goddess Asht Bhuja (eight armed) and some other deities is still extant. A pipal (*ficus religiosa*) tree has now grown within the fort.

#### **Bahadurpur Fort in Sadar Tahsil**

On the top of a hill known as Bahadurpur the highest (1,980 metres) point in the district, near Tepra village in pargana Bahadurpur tahsil Sadar, distant about forty kilometres from Bilaspur, is the site of Bahadurpur fort. The range derives its name from the Bahadurpur fort. Due to its comparatively greater height it receives occasional snow fall in winter.

The range is embellished by a beautiful small wood of deodar and *ban* trees. Almost in the centre of this range, in picturesque surroundings, is perched a rest-house. The fort is said to have been built by Raja Keshab Chand (c.A.D. 1620)<sup>2</sup>. This ancient stronghold is about six kilometres above Namol linked with the latter by a mule-road through which passed the traffic to the fort during the reign of rulers. From this high place the Ratanpur fort, Swarghat, the Fatehpur fort, the Naina Devi hill, plains near Rupar and the mountains of Simla can be seen and look beautiful.

Baron Charles Hugel, a German traveller, passing through Bilaspur in

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<sup>1</sup>. Achhar Singh, *Tarikh and Geography of Bilaspur*.

<sup>2</sup>. *Ibid*.

1835 has left on record a vivid picture of this fort. He says\*, "Towards the south, the three fortresses of Bahadurpoor, Futihpoor and Champa reminded me vividly of those knightly castles built on the summits of the hills in my native land. Not only is the likeness in situation to be traced : erected during the last century by the Gorkhas, like our own fortresses they served for the security of the little tyrants who plundered both travellers and inhabitants indiscriminately, and then retreated with their ill-gotten booty within their fastnesses. An end is now put to these robberies in India ; regular contributions are enforced by the Company on property on one side of the Setlej ; and no sooner does an individual give his portion- however small- to the common stock, than he claims the protection of the Government as his right". It is, therefore, obvious from the above account that this fort was built prior to 1835. But with the passage of time, it fell down and now only the ruins of this stronghold are in existence at the site.

From the ruins, still existing, it is presumed that it was round in shape. A portion of a wall of about six metres in length and not less than fifteen metres in height is still holding its own. Along the entire circumference, apart from the aforesaid high wall, a one-metre high stone wall is also still visible. The wall gives an idea how strong the fort could have been in its heyday. Within this walled arena is a square structure resembling a tank about 3x3x6 metres. The local belief is that this structure was meant for storing jewellery and other valuable belongings of the rulers but it would be more probable to assume that it was a device for storing water for the use of the garrison. Raja Bijai Chand had built many a building here to dwell in during the summer season. These continued to be in existence up to 1947 when the local administration got them pulled down and sold the building material. Heaps of stones still lying on the sites are proofs to support this statement.

### Barthin

It is a village in tahsil Ghamarwin at a distance of thirty-four kilometres from Bilaspur on the Bilaspur-Talai motorable road. There is a higher secondary school, an allopathic dispensary, a maternity and child welfare centre, a veterinary hospital and a branch post office. The total population, according to 1971 census came to 752 souls. The total area of the village is 121 hectares.

### Baseh Fort in Tahsil Ghamarwin

Like the fort of Bachhretu, the stronghold at Baseh was, it is believed, also built by Raja Ratan Chand (1355-146). This lies about six kilometres northwards of the Bachhretu fort, already mentioned, on the same range of

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\*Hugel, Baron Charles, *Kashmir and the Punjab*, 1835, p. 24.



the hill locally known as the Kot Dhar, wherefrom a view of a portion of Gobind Sagar can be had. The distance from Bilaspur is about forty kilometres and can, therefore, be gained by the same route as leads to the Bachhretu fort. The site of the fort is marked by a rectangular space which stands divided into three separate portions comprising high walled structures and the thickness of these walls is about one metre. The first of the three enclosures contains the marks of a few small rooms. Within the area of these structures is a tank, the usual feature of forts in Bilaspur, meant for the storage of rain water for use by the garrison. The fort is no longer in occupation and once covered an area of 200x45 metres.

### **Bhakra Dam**

Situated at Bhakra village of Bilaspur, about thirteen kilometres upstream from Nangal township, it is one of the highest straight gravity dams in the world. The lake is about ninety kilometres long covering an area of about 168 sq km of which ninety per cent is in Bilaspur and the remaining ten per cent in Una district. About ten per cent area and fourteen per cent population of the district have been affected by its construction. The Dam was dedicated to the Nation by Late Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru on November 20, 1963. The view of the vast Dam and green jungles around is fascinating indeed. There is ample scope for boating, fishing and hunting and is visited by thousands of tourists, Indian as well as foreign, every year. A tug service is available for the tourists between Bilaspur and Bhakra. The smooth drive in a motor boat in the Gobind Sagar scarcely gives an idea of millions of man-days spent in finishing the Dam. With the giant plants and intricate machinery in the background and the power houses constructions on both the banks of the river it looks unbelievably simple though to quote late Pt. Nehru "its construction is something tremendous, something stupendous and something which shakes you up when you see it." It has now become another must in the itinerary of those in search of natural pleasure spots.

A brief history of the dam would not be misplaced here. Conceived as a modest storage reservoir in 1908 by Sir Louis Dane, the then Lieutenant-Governor of Punjab, the scheme underwent successive changes once it was conceived as a dam in the gorge near the present site with a height varying between 120 m and 150 m, the Satluj valley project to benefit the areas now in Pakistan, plus a plain of five lakh acres of land in the Beas Doab tract. Finally it was in 1948 that the decision was taken to construct the dam to the maximum safe height, the determining factor being the condition of the foundation rocks, to derive full irrigation and power benefits. The top of the dam was fixed at an elevation of about 520 m above the mean sea level

and the reservoir at an elevation of 515 m. The evolutionary process continued till the last stages of its construction.

### **Bilaspur Town**

Bilaspur, formerly the seat of the ruler of the State, now submerged in Gobind Sagar, was situated on the south-east side of the Satluj, in a spacious valley through which the Satluj winds its course. The situation of the old Bilaspur town was remarkably picturesque on a comparatively level ground extending on the left bank of the river. Here, in striking contrast to the historic town, which according to a legend was founded by Rishi Ved Vyas, the buildings were mostly done in stone and cement.

The area holding the old Bilaspur town, including numerous temples, had to be cleared of human beings and deities for making room to the waters of the Gobind Sagar. Like men the deities were treated with compassion and kindness and have been suitably rehabilitated in a nice temple near the bus-stand.

The town has had a chequered career witnessing many vicissitudes due to political upheavals and domestic turmoils, but above all the Satluj has proved to be a treacherous friend and unkind neighbour to it, completely devastating it more than once. Those who had seen the old town and now look at the pock-marked *Sandhu-ka-maidan* can recall with nostalgia the location of various buildings and the palace. Here in the town ruled the monarchs of Bilaspur for more than 500 years.

The erstwhile State of Bilaspur, formerly known as Kahlur, was carved out, as has been remarked in Chapter II of this volume, in about 697 with its capital at Kot Kahlur which was abandoned in favour of Sunhani in 1600 by Bik Chand, thirtieth in descent from the founder. Sunhani too was given up as the seat of Government subsequently. Hutchison observes, "The residence of the ruling family had continued to be at Sunhani, from the time of Bik-Chand. Dip-Chand conceived a strong dislike to the place, and determined on making a change. Accompanied by four faqirs, his advisors- two Hindu and two Muhammadan - he, therefore, sought a new site for the capital, and finally fixed upon a place on the left bank of the Satluj, traditionally called Biasgufa. There he erected a palace, called Dholar, overlooking the river, and founded a town on the river bank, and called it Biaspur, now Bilaspur."

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\*Hutchison, *History of the Punjab Hill States*, Vol. II, p. 501.

Only about a century or so had passed since the founding of this town when an unprecedented flood in the Satluj, devastated it completely. This took place in 1762.

The wound caused by this sudden natural calamity, it appears, soon healed up and the town once again started humming with life and activity. Many eminent European travellers passed through Bilaspur and each of them has left on record their impressions. Chief among them were George Forster, William Moorcroft, Baron Charles Hugel, G. T. Vigne, Edward Thornton and M. C. Forbes.

Besides, the enchanting scenic beauty of the town described, in so many words, by keen foreign observers, the main attractions included the Vyas Gufa, the place of meditation by saint Ved Vyas, some ancient temples including Shri Rangnath Ji and Shri Gopal Ji temple. After about three centuries of its complete devastation the town had in store for it a complete and eternal destruction by means of the Satluj water, but in a very different circumstances inasmuch as it was not a natural calamity but a feat of human ingenuity, in the form of constructing a dam at Bhakra which impounded the waters and made them re-trace their course upward, forming a lake of great dimension and beauty submerging the town for ever. The total area of the old Bilaspur was 184 hectares.

### **Bilaspur Township**

It is situated just above the old town of Bilaspur at a height of 670 m above the mean sea level. A tourist visiting Bhakra is sure to fall under the spell of irresistible temptation of including New Bilaspur Township in his itinerary. The town prettily perched on the flank of a hill has been conceived, planned, designed and built on the latest lines. In fact, the New Bilaspur Township can be truly described as the first planned hill town of the country. The pleasure of a visit will be enhanced manifold when a motor launch is preferred as the means of travel, gliding through cool and enchanting waters of the lake, to a dusty drive through road. It has all the amenities of a modern town and comprises of six sectors underneath total area of 8.8 sq km. In the Government Sector all major public utility buildings such as the hospital, college, school, town-hall, industrial estate, and the Government offices, and a large number of residential quarters have been constructed. According to 1971 census the population of the town is 7,037.

The *Nalwari*, or annual cattle fair, is held at Bilaspur for four or five days in March/April. A good trade is usually done. The occasion is marked

by racing, wrestling and other amusements. Cattle are brought from Nalagarh and the neighbouring parts of Punjab and sold to the zamindars. There is a circuit house, a Public Works Department rest-house, a Public Works Department rest-house for class III employees and a Municipal rest-house. Besides, a tourist bungalow, there is another rest-house located at Dholra on a picturesque site. The newly built town lies at a distance of about ninety-three kilometres from Simla, on the Simla-Bilaspur-Mandi road and sixty-four kilometres from Kiratpur on the Chandigarh-Manali road. Its distance from Rupar in Punjab is about ninety-five kilometres. It is easily approachable as regular bus services are maintained from and to Simla, Mandi and Chandigarh.

### **Chanjhar or Jhanjhar Fort, Tahsil Ghamarwin**

The site of the fort is distant about six kilometres from Barthin, which falls at a distance of about twenty kilometres from Bilaspur. This fort was constructed, during the reign of Raja Mahan Chand, in 1795, when Raja Sansar Chand of Kangra invaded Bilaspur and occupied all the territory on the right bank of the Satluj (pargana Ajmerpur and Sunhani) and annexed them with his own territories. He called it Chhatipur i.e. a fort on the chest of Bilaspur. In this battle Raja Dharam Prakash of Sirmur who came to the assistance of Bilaspur was killed. Now the stronghold has fallen and no visible trace of the fort is to be found on the spot.

### **Deoli**

This hitherto unknown village is rapidly gaining prominence as the site of one of the biggest and fast developing mirror carp hatchery. The place lies at a distance of about thirteen kilometres from Bilaspur towards Mandi just below the Simla-Mandi road. During the Second Five Year Plan period, two tanks, to serve as the mirror carp hatcheries with a combined capacity of seventy-six lakh gallons of water, were completed. The unit established here is spread over an area of 4.04 hectares and with its two tanks, has a capacity to produce 1.5 to 2 millions of mirror carp fingerlings annually for stocking the reservoir. Another similar unit of hatchery was established during the Third Five Year Plan period. Besides, export of mirror carp fingerlings to places outside Himachal Pradesh the hatchery is to keep up a constant supply of fingerlings to the Gobind Sagar.

### **Deoth Sidh or Balak Nath temple**

Though actually the temple of this deified saint does not fall within the limits of this district, but it lies so near on the north-western border of the

district (Hamirpur district), its importance as a place of interest to Bilaspur can not be undermined. Also, Deoth Sidh (Balak Nath), when in flesh and blood, so the legend says, had served a land-lady at village Talai of Ghamarwin tahsil of this district and during the course of that service had shown his miraculous powers to the villagers before he was placed as a deity. These factors have led its mention to be made in this volume.

Precisely the temple stands near Chakmoh at a distance of about fifty kilometres from Bilaspur, easily approachable by a vehicle. Two different versions about the origin of the cult of Deoth Sidh or Balak Nath are current. According to one, the story goes that he (Balak Nath) used to work as cow-boy to an old land-lady at Talai village and was fed with maize bread and *lassi*. One day villagers complained against him to his land-lady that due to his negligence her cattle had damaged their crops. On being asked to explain the lapse, the boy took the villagers for inspection of the alleged damage. Curiously enough the crops alleged to have been damaged were found to be much better as compared with the undamaged crops. All then realised that the boy was a super-human being and begged his pardon. Guru Gorakh Nath of ancient fame on seeing this miracle requested the boy to become his disciple. The boy however, refused to oblige the Guru and decided to retire to the forest. He took his land-lady to a nearby tree and showed her all the bread that had been given to him by her as food during the last twelve years. The tree with a hollow inside is still there. He then took her to a pit, a few paces away, and showed her all the *lassi* stored there for the last twelve years.

The boy then left the place and some days later the villagers saw a small light through a cave at the hill top, in the jungle. They went there and saw the same hermit boy in deep meditation and thenceonward he was known Balak Nath (boy hermit) and the place as Deoth Sidh (the light of truth).

Thousands of people, generally in March and April, visit the temple constructed around the small cave in the rock. A few shops have sprung up near the temple and the Guru of the temple has also built comfortable houses for himself. A pucca serai has been constructed for the stay of the visitors.

A somewhat varied version of Balak Nath is found at page 262 of *"The Glossary of the Tribes and Castes of the Punjab and North West Frontier Province-Vol. I"*.

### **Dadrana**

This place is situated near the Swarghat bungalow and is famous for

the water spring called Luhnd containing water of reputed medicinal properties. It is visited by many people suffering from goitre and various other complaints. The place is easily approachable as it lies near to the Bilaspur-Chandigarh motorable road.

#### **Fatehpur Fort in Tahsil Sadar**

As a defensive device or an offensive base it was customary in the erstwhile Bilaspur State to build strongholds on commanding sites on or near the boundary of the principality. The fort at Fatehpur is one of the similar strongholds. The site of the fort situates on a hill about forty-five kilometers away from Bilaspur town and about three kilometres upward from Swarghat, a place lying about forty kilometres from Bilaspur on the Bilaspur-Kiratpur motorable road. No historical evidence is forthcoming to establish as to when and by whom this fort was built. The fact, that about one hundred and thirty-five years back the fort was garrisoned by the State troops for whom it was the duty of the local residents of Fatehpur pargana to carry and convey rations etc. from Bilaspur, still lingers in the memory of the people. The British period is considered to be a time of internal peace when the princes of various neighbouring States forgot to mount attacks or carry invasions on one another. This peaceful era precluded the necessity of maintenance of force and strongholds as a result of which the Fatehpur fort, as also many others, fell into disuse and consequently decayed and came down. This fort is absolutely in a dilapidated condition with its ruins in the shape of heaps of stones still conspicuous. From a close inspection of the site it is possible to know its dimensions, of a time when it was holding its head high. It was possibly a square structure with each arm about sixty metres long. A portion of wall about six metres long, still standing, serves to give an idea about its height which is not less than about twenty-five metres and about two metres thick. Within the area of the fort, it appears, was a tank for storage of water for the use of the garrison. This has now completely been buried under the debris which are lying in heaps here, there and everywhere. The standing wall also contains many a peep hole through which bullets could be fired at the besiegers. Below the principal fort, it is said, there were seven strong places serving as pickets. Their existence can be traced only through the heaps of stones lying scattered about. Local residents believe that this stronghold was not meant exclusively for the forces but in times of troubles and disturbances even the civil population used to be sheltered there.

#### **Gherwin**

It is a place situated in Ghamarwin tahsil, famous for a fair, lasting for eight days, held here, from Guga *Naumi* onward, in commemoration of the exploits of Gugu; a Hindu Rajput prince, who in his youth subdued his

enemies most heroically. In the month of *Bhadra* bands (*mandlis*) of local singers go about singing episodes from one end of the district to another. For a whole week village after village becomes the scene of an important fair. The villagers worship and make offerings in cash and kind at the shrines of Guga dedicated to him throughout the district. It is a matter of common belief that propitiation of Guga wards off danger from snakes, which swarm the hills during the rains. Gherwin hamlet lies at a distance of about twenty-eight kilometres from Bilaspur, connected by a road. Besides the temple, there is a higher secondary school, a dispensary, a block hut and a branch post office. Protected water supply scheme is maintained in the village. According to 1971 census the total population of the village is 1,003 and its area is 457 hectares.

### **Ghamarwin**

Ghamarwin, at a distance of about twenty-nine kilometres from Bilaspur, is the headquarters of the sub division (civil) and tahsil of the same name, situated towards the right side of the Satluj on the Bilaspur-Hamirpur motorable road. Locally the importance of this place is second to Bilaspur. Among the places of significance within the district it claims a position of note. There is a small town committee and usually necessary supplies are available. There is a higher secondary school, a rest-house, a police station, a primary health centre and a post and telegraph office. Being the headquarters of development block also it is naturally a scene of developmental activities.

### **Jhandutta**

A small village situated at a distance of forty kilometres away from Bilaspur in Gherwin pargana, it is the headquarters of Gherwin Block, having a small bazar, and a high school. Visitors can stay in the Public Works Department rest-house. The total population according to 1971 census comes to 1,603. The area of the village comprises 465 hectares.

### **Kandror**

Kandror village has gained prominence and has become a tourist attraction only during the recent times because of its being the site of a bridge over the upper reaches of the Gobind Sagar. This is considered to be the highest bridge in Asia and second highest bridge in the world being about 60 m high and 285 m in span. The construction of the bridge was started in April, 1959 and was completed in 1965. The total cost of construction came to Rs. 28,12,998. It connects Bilaspur Sadar and Ghamarwin tahsils of this district, and is a marvellous engineering feat. The pillars supporting the bridge are hollowed. At present there is no rest-house near the site of the

high bridge but it being quite near to both the Bilaspur town and Ghamarw in, visitors can return to either of the places. The total area of the village is 267 hectares. Population according to 1971 census is 639. There is a higher secondary school.

### **Kot Kahlur Fort in Tahsil Sadar**

This fort situates at a distance of about three kilometres from Ganguwal in Punjab. According to various versions, close by at the foot of the Naina Devi hill, Raja Bir Chand, an ancestor of Raja Kahal Chand, built a palace-cum-fort called Kot Kahlur. It is a matter of common belief that he was led to accomplish this project by Naina and Kahlu Gujjars after whom the places Naina Devi and Kahlur fort have been named. A legend, as to the selection of the site of the fort is recalled. Naina, Gujjar or a shepherd was a resident of village Kanphara. Once his goat ran astray in the jungle and at night calved. A lion overtook it. When Naina set out in search of his lost goat, he saw on the summit of a hill that calved goat was engaged in a scuffle with the lion. He was struck with wonder on witnessing the prodigious scene and after a pause warded off the lion, and brought the goat home. In the successive year another similar incident occurred at the site. In that very year raja of Bilaspur came to Kot Kahlur in search of a site for a fort. The raja consulted all the learned and wise persons. One of them proposed the name of Naina Gujjar saying that he was a good astrologer. Naina Gujjar selected the site, where the goat had faced the lion. He told that the place endowed with some divine power which enabled the goat to encounter and fight valiantly with the lion. Construction of a fort at such a site would always bring victory to its owner. Consequently the raja consulted the pundits, who incidentally, had some family feud with Naina, and suggested that the adviser should be beheaded and the head laid in the foundation, which act alone would result in fulfilment of raja's desires. The raja acting upon their advice got Naina beheaded and started construction of the fort of Kot Kahlur.

The fort is still excellent state of preservation. It is a square structure built of stones, each side about thirty metres long and as much high. Its walls are about two metres thick and still unspoilt and unshaken. It has two storeys each about fifteen metres high. The floor of the second storey, supported on numerous high stone pillars, is now used as an armoury of the police. The upper storey, previously a large hall only, has now been altered inasmuch as along its walls twelve rooms have been built to house the police personnel though a considerable open space serving as a hall is still available in the middle. About twelve metres above the floor of the second storey there were certain window shaped places with small peeping holes for the garrison to reconnoitre and, if need be to shoot at besiegers. Most of these



hollows have now been closed with cement or iron-mesh. Within the fort, in the upper storey, is a small temple to Naina Devi with a stone idol.

### **Markand or Markandeya**

This is a famous shrine about twenty kilometres from Bilaspur, in tahsil Sadar named after renowned Rishi Markandeya who lived and worshipped there. According to a legend a tunnel connected Markand and Vyas cave and the two Rishis, Vyas and Markandeya, used to visit each other through this sub-terranean path. In addition to the shrine there is also a water spring of ancient fame where a night fair is held annually on *Baisakhi* day. It is believed that the water cures children suffering from skin diseases while a bath at the main spring on *Baisakhi* day shakes off sterility in women.

### **Namol**

Namol an electrified small hamlet is situated at about sixty-eight kilometres from Simla and about twenty-five kilometres from Bilaspur on the Simla-Bilaspur-Mandi motorable road on which regular bus service is maintained. There is a comfortable rest-house commanding a panoramic view all around. The bungalow stands on a small ridge overlooking an immense depth on either side. The country side, particularly after the rainy season presents a feast of greenery and view of distant hills hamstring. It is a modern and comfortable rest-house with all amenities. The place has now developed considerably with a few shops, a high school, a veterinary dispensary, a civil dispensary, a police post and a branch post office. There is a small Thakurdwara which was built by Raja Amar Chand in 1883. Brass idols of Rama, Lakshman, Sita and Hanuman are stowed therein.

### **Panjgain**

This electrified village is situated at a distance of nineteen kilometres from Bilaspur, about three kilometres off Bilaspur-Mandi motorable road. It has a high school, a civil dispensary, a maternity and child welfare centre, and a branch post office. The village also contains a temple. The area of the village is 344 hectares with a population of 1,077 persons according to 1971 census. During the reign of Raja Hari Chand in 1863, this village was the tahsil headquarters of the same name.

### **Shri Naina Devi Ji**

The most notable place of worship in the district is the temple of Shri Naina Devi Ji situated on the hill top of that name which rises some 915 metres above the sacred town of Anandpur Sahib in Rupar district of Punjab. The temple stands on the very summit of the hill above a small

bazar, and is reached by a long flight of stone steps. It is about fifteen kilometres from Ganguwal and about eighteen kilometres from Anandpur Sahib. Until lately it was a tiring process to climb the hill on foot, but recently motorable road has been constructed up to the foot of the steps. From its situation at the top of the triangular hillock it commands an unparalleled view of the holy Anandpur Sahib Gurdwara on one side and Gobind Sagar on the other. The temple was built by Raja Bir Chand in the eighth century. According to a legend Naina an Ahir, during the reign of Raja Bir Chand was herding cattle on the flat summit of a hill above Jandbhari when he observed that his cows were voluntarily dropping milk upon a white stone. He informed the raja, who proceeded to the spot, and there found a beautiful image of the goddess Durga, close to the stone. A temple was forthwith erected, and called Naina Devi after the Ahir. Bir Chand was of a kind and pious religious disposition. His belief in miraculous revelations remained undiminished to the end of his life. It was in accordance with such a faith that on the highest peak of the hill of that name, he built the Naina Devi temple.

**Guru Gobind Singh's sacrifice :** The story has it that Guru Gobind Singh, before embarking on his campaign against the Turk General of the Mogul ruler came up to Naina Devi to seek the blessings of the Goddess for his enterprise. He brought with him a Brahman of Varanasi famed for his piety and learning, on whose advice a mammoth *havan* (offering on the sacred fire) was performed in which tons of cereals, ghi, gur etc., were consumed. The sacred fire of the *havan kund* was kept burning for months, until at last it is said that the goddess appeared in person. Guru Gobind Singh managed to present his sword, which the goddess touched, and then disappeared. The Brahman pronounced the omen auspicious and satisfactory. The goddess commands great fame and respect.

Puja in the temple is performed by thirty village *pujaris* turn by turn. Besides, the two fairs during both the *Navratras*, another and the biggest fair takes place annually on *Sravana Ashtmi* in commemoration of goddess Naina. Thousands of pilgrims from Himachal Pradesh, Haryana and the Punjab gather to pay homage to the goddess in which both Hindus and Sikhs take part. Many devotees instead of walking cover miles of distance by repeatedly prostrating full length on the road and rising up to reach the temple. Groups of people throng from all sides singing and shouting religious slogans and chanting mantras. Police and social organisations have to pull their resources during the fair to control and regulate the entry and exit to the temple. Naina Devi temple for the whole duration of the fair, presents a scene of hustle and bustle. The temple and the streets descending to the town over a long flight of steps are colourfully illuminated at night and

this display of light lends charm to the occasion. Cinema shows are arranged by the Public Relations Department. Occasionally exhibitions are also held by the Agriculture and Animal Husbandry Departments. There is a small town committee functioning here. One of the European tourist who visited the spot was G. T. Vigne who has left an interesting account of this place. The place possesses a decent municipal rest-house and a tourist inn. The population of the town according to 1971 census comes to 494. The area of the town is 44 hectares. The town is electrified and contains drinking water supply system. There also exists a middle school and a sanskrit *pathshala*.

### **Ratanpur Fort in Tahsil Sadar**

This stronghold is situated on a peak some twenty-seven kilometres away from Bilaspur near Khui village of pargana Ratanpur in Bilaspur Sadar tahsil. It lies near the Bilaspur-Kiratpur road, now negotiable by vehicles, and a link road at village Jamli about thirty-two kilometres from Bilaspur connects the place. No record is available as to when and by whom this fort was erected. But its relics remind of the strategical device of security adopted by the monarchs of the erstwhile Bilaspur State. This stronghold played its usual role during Gurkha War of 18 3-15. Fraser, the military officer of British army executing these operations, has left on record a vivid picture of this fort which gives an idea of its architectural details, strength and strategical position. He says, "on the 13th (February, 1815) Colonel Arnold's detachment moved to Ruttungurh, a small stone fort belonging to the Bilaspur rajah, very strong naturally, and facing the western aspect of Malown (the position of Ummr Singh), distant about 2,000 yards. Two formidable attacks were also to be made against the position of Malown itself including one from Ruttungurh, of a similar force, under Captain Strowers, of the 18th. The column commanded by Captain Strowers advanced in gallant style up the hill towards the enemy's cantonments : there the enemy met them, rushing down sword in hand, while a cross fire was poured in upon them from the jungle on each side. Our men had not loaded, that they might be induced to depend on the bayonet ; and had they been loaded, the troops that fired upon the flanks were concealed from their view. Their gallant commander, anxious to show an example to his men, sprang forwards, and even outstripped his four orderlies, who were expert swordsmen, and attended him closely. A Ghoorkha sirdar met him first, whom he killed with his sword : the body falling on him, from the steepness of the ground, staggered him ; and several others, rushing on him before he could recover himself, stabbed and shot him dead. At the same time Lieutenant Spellesby, severely

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\* Fraser, J. B., *Himala Mountains*, 1820, pp. 37-40.

wounded in the knee, was carried to the rear : and the troops discouraged by the fall of their first and second in command; and a considerable loss from a very galling fire, wavered, fell back, and retreated to the bottom of the hill, covered by the fire of the guns of Ruttungurh."

Subsequently a mention was made of this important stronghold by Thornton in the following terms :

"**RUTTUNGURH**, in Kuhloor, a fort on the crest of the steep ridge of Malown, and a mile and half N. W. of that stronghold. During the brief but obstinately-contested war with the Goorkhas, it was occupied by the British troops, and though of inconsiderable size, being substantially built, and very strong by its site, formed a very important position in the operations against Malown." "Though now laying in utterly neglected condition this square stone stronghold, with each side about fifty metres and about twenty high walls is still defying the natural and slow process of decay. Its resistance to decay is a living proof of its strength and high architectural skill. Within the walls is a tank-like place for storing water. Outside the walls of fort, towards east, is a huge rock on which countless bullet-marks, showered by the enemy, are still visible. It is said that Rajah Amar Chand (1883-1888) repaired this fort and utilised it as a gaol for the prisoners belonging to Ratanpur. Prisoners of war were also housed here."

#### **Sariun Fort at Sariun range in Tahsil Ghamarwin**

To the eastern side of the Tiun range, on the lofty range and peak of Sariun, lies this stronghold at an elevation of about 1,500 metres above the mean sea level. It is about fifty-eight kilometres from Bilaspur. This fort played its usual role, in the struggle between the erstwhile States of Bilaspur and Kangra during the minority rule of Mahan Chand. Udhab Singh Kumar in his narrative, *The Gurkha conquest of Arki*, records this incident which runs as follows.

"In about 1800, when Devi Chand, the Raja of Bilaspur, died, his successor, Mahan Chand, was left a minor, and so the State was administered by his widow, Rani Nagar Devi, assisted by an official named Kulwant Rae, a Bhat by caste. But, on account of the bad management of the State, Sansar Chand, the Raja of Kangra (then a powerful) captured two fortresses named Tiwan and Sariwan with many neighbouring villages belonging to the State of Bilaspur. Upon this Kulwant Rae left for Sujjanpur (the then capital of Kangra) to do his utmost to compel the Raja to give back the fortresses.

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1. Thornton, Edward, *East India Gazetteer*, 1862, p. 845.

2. *Fortresses on the Kangra border*.

But the Raja on the contrary, turned a deaf ear to his request, and so Kulwant Rae returned in despair to Bilaspur, where he took an oath not to return to Bilaspur unless he had destroyed the Kangra State." Nothing now remains of the fort except its ruins. It appears to be rectangular edifice made of stones. Its main gate faces west. From the relics it can be said that the fort was about twelve metres high. The thickness of the walls is about one metre. Within its walls a part of the area is marked by the ruins of what might be once the living rooms numbering about fifteen. The walls of the fort contain places shaped like a window with certain holes across the wall to facilitate showering of lead upon the besiegers. Tradition holds that the fort was originally built by some raja of the erstwhile Suket State and was subsequently wrested by the ruler of Bilaspur. The local people entertain a superstitious belief due to which the stones once forming the part of the fort are not used in any residential building.

### **Sunhani**

Sunhani, now a small hamlet, has figured in the history of Bilaspur for it once afforded shelter to one of its rulers, namely Bik Chand who in a bid to save himself from embracing Muhammadanism, like his father and two younger brothers, had to fly across Satluj to this place. After the death of his father, Bik Chand continued at Sunhani though his installation ceremony took place at Kot Kahlur. Sunhani continued to be the seat of Government till Dip Chand ascended the throne. He developed a strong dislike for the place and determined to make a change which he did in favour of Bilaspur. Thus Sunhani situated on the right bank of Seer stream about twenty-five kilometres from Bilaspur on Bilaspur-Talai motorable road has had the rare fortune of becoming a capital of the State for about fifty-three years and serves to show to the historians, even to-day, how places also become subject to vicissitudes of time. It is also approachable from Ghamarwin by eight kilometres cutcha motorable road. The total area of the village is 421 hectares and the population according to 1971 census comes to 1,043.

### **Swarghat**

For short excursions and picnics Swarghat is ideally situated about forty kilometres off Bilaspur on the Bilaspur-Chandigarh motorable road on which regular bus services are available. Swarghat is prettily perched at an elevation of about 1,220 metres from the sea level. There is a forest rest-house built among thick pine trees which can be made use of by the tourists and excursionists by applying for reservation before hand to the Divisional Forest Officer, Bilaspur. It is now connected by twenty-two kilometres motorable road with Nalagarh. The place contains a Public

Works Department rest-house, a police post, primary school, a veterinary check post and a few shops on the road side. Naina Devi Ji and Bhakra Dam are also approachable from this place. There is a temple dedicated to Lakshmi Narain. An ideal spot for a quiet overnight's stay for the tourists.

### Tiun Fort in Tahsil Ghamarwin

Relics of a fort on the top of a hill known as Tiun range, at a distance of about fifty-five kilometres from Bilaspur, on the Ali *khad* crossing Ghamarwin-Ladror motorable road, and, about ten kilometres off Ghamarwin proper, still serves to remind of the ancient turbulent times when wars in this area were perhaps a routine feature. An idea of the antiquity of this fort may be had from the fact that even the tradition does not point to its date of construction and to the person responsible for its building. Obviously it must have been built by some local ruler. A proof, though not a sound one, about the time of its construction lies perhaps in the brief stone inscription on a slab set in the inner wall. It is obviously difficult to arrive at a definite conclusion on the basis of this short and obscure inscription. Nevertheless if the figures 1,142 refer to the *Bikrami* era (because Christian era was not in use in these hills then), the fort must be as old as about nine hundred years. The second figure may possibly refer to the regnal year of the then prince who might have built the fort. Any how the scientific deciphering of the inscription may reveal some different result. From the architectural style a layman would simply regard the fort to have been built in the quite remote past.

Even though the fort has crumbled down to a very large extent still from its relics it is possible to ascertain its main contours. It is roofless rectangular building with longer sides about four hundred metres in length and the broader part about two hundred metres. The height of its walls vary from about two to ten metres the reason being that the rear wall is partly on a natural protuberance the top of which has been still made higher by adding two metres walls. The thickness of the walls vary from half a metre to one metre thicker on the base, thinner towards the top. Only hammer dressed stones have been used throughout. The main gate to the stronghold is about three metres high and about five and a half metres wide facing west. Within the fort there are certain curious objects. It is believed that previously there were a number of rooms within the fort which with the passage of time have fallen down and cannot be traced. There is a small square structure with about two metres sides, not less than ten metres high. It contains two or three windows at a considerable height. In its roof can be seen about seven stone rafters each about two metres long. It is difficult

to say to what use this structure was put to as there are no visible climbing devices in this structure. Presumably like the practice in those times in most parts of the world, it was made to serve as prison to criminal and dangerous opponents. It does not support the idea of its being the reconnoitring tower. There are also two huge rocks buried to the brim in the ground hollowed with human hands, each having room to contain about 3,000 kilograms of foodgrains. These must have served as the granaries of the garrison. Yet another object within the four walls of the fort is a temple dedicated to goddess still occasionally worshipped by the people of the surrounding area. Ruins of a Siva temple can also be seen. It houses a human shaped idol with four arms, and, another undefinable idol. Two sufficiently large sized tanks also exist which could only be filled with rain water. As usual the walls contain cavities and holes for the members of the troops to see and shoot through. The entire area, built or unbuilt, of the fort is about 14 hectares. The fort is said to have once served as a prison to an uncle of Raja Kharak Chand.

### Vyas Gupha

The name of sage Vyas is well known in these parts and in fact he must have frequently roamed about in this area from Thaneshwar to Rohtang in Kulu wherefrom river Vyas emerges and where there is a pond (*kund*) called as Vyas *kund*. It is likely that the sage used to come down during acute winter and sojourned in this cave. It is situated at the foot of the new township. The belief is that Vyas Rishi meditated in this cave. The original name of the town, Vyaspur is believed to have been derived from this cave. The Vyas Rishi of *Mahabharata* fame, interpreted the divinity and philosophy of life in meditation in this cave, which lies on the left bank of river Satluj. It is a place of pilgrimage.







## **Appendices**

## APPENDIX I .

## FLORA

Belt No. 1 (300—900 metres) (Please see page 22)

| Sl. No. | Botanical name                    | English name | Vernacular or local name               | Locality          | Remarks   |
|---------|-----------------------------------|--------------|--|-------------------|-----------|
| 1       | 2                                 | 3            | 4                                      | 5                 | 6         |
| 1.      | <i>Adhatoda Vasica</i>            |              | I <i>Acanthaceae</i>                   | Chaniri, Sungal   | Brushwood |
| 2.      | <i>Agave Sisalana</i>             |              | <i>Basoolit</i>                        |                   |           |
| 3.      | <i>Lannea grandis</i>             |              | II <i>Amaryllidaceae</i>               |                   |           |
| 4.      | <i>Mangifera indica</i>           | Mango        | <i>Kohar patha</i><br><i>Salamara.</i> | All misc. forests | Tree      |
| 5.      | <i>Pistacia integerrima</i>       |              | <i>Amb</i>                             | All misc. forests | Tree      |
| 6.      | <i>Rhus Parvifolia</i>            |              | <i>Kakar singi</i>                     | Naina Devi        | Shrub     |
|         |                                   |              |  | Swarghat          |           |
|         |                                   |              |  | Sangan            |           |
|         |                                   |              | III <i>Apocynaceae</i>                 |                   |           |
| 7.      | <i>Carissa opaca</i> (Spinarum)   |              | <i>Gana</i>                            | All forests       |           |
| 8.      | <i>Holarrhena antidysenterica</i> |              | <i>Deor</i>                            | All forests       | Tree      |

|                          |                                 |                                |                         |         |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|---------|
| 9.                       | <i>Ichnocarpus frutescens</i>   | <i>Bakarbel</i>                | All forests             | Climber |
| 10.                      | <i>Nerium odorum</i>            | <i>Ghanira</i>                 | Kot Dhar,<br>Naina Devi | Shrub   |
| 11.                      | <i>Vallis Heynei</i>            | <i>Kali Dudhali</i>            | All forests             | Climber |
| IV <i>Asclepiadaceae</i> |                                 |                                |                         |         |
| 12.                      | <i>Calotropis procera</i>       | <i>Ak</i>                      | Naina Devi              | Shrub   |
| 13.                      | <i>Cryptolepis Buchanani</i>    | <i>Dudhali</i>                 | All misc.<br>forests    | Climber |
| 14.                      | <i>Tylophora Hirsuta</i>        | <i>Terni</i>                   | Gochar,<br>Naina Devi   | Shrub   |
| V <i>Berberidaceae</i>   |                                 |                                |                         |         |
| 15.                      | <i>Berberis Lycium</i>          | <i>Kasmal</i>                  | Chathali,               | Shrub   |
| 16.                      | <i>Capparis Horrida</i>         | <i>Hts, ardanda</i>            | Bahadurpur              |         |
| 17.                      | <i>Crataeva religiosa</i>       | <i>Barna</i>                   | Sarlun                  |         |
| 18.                      | <i>Oroxylum indicum</i>         | <i>Taiplanga</i>               | Naina Devi              | Tree    |
|                          |                                 |                                | Naina Devi              | Tree    |
| VI <i>Bignoniaceae</i>   |                                 |                                |                         |         |
| 19.                      | <i>Stereospermum suaveolens</i> | <i>Padal</i>                   | Naina Devi              |         |
| 20.                      | <i>Elacourtia Ramontchi</i>     | <i>Kangu, Kajai,<br/>Kukai</i> | All misc.<br>forests    | Tree    |

| 1   | 2                            | 3 | 4                          | 5                    | 6     |
|-----|------------------------------|---|----------------------------|----------------------|-------|
|     |                              |   | VII <i>Boraginaceae</i>    |                      |       |
| 21. | <i>Cordia obliqua</i> (Myxa) |   | <i>Lasura</i>              | Planted              | Tree  |
| 22. | <i>Ehretia laevis</i>        |   | <i>Chamror</i>             | All misc.<br>forests | Tree  |
|     |                              |   | VIII <i>Caprifoliaceae</i> |                      |       |
| 23. | <i>Abelia triflora</i>       |   |                            | All misc.<br>forests | Shrub |
|     |                              |   | IX <i>Celastraceae</i>     |                      |       |
| 24. | <i>Celastrus paniculata</i>  |   | <i>Sankheran</i>           | All misc.<br>forests | Shrub |
| 25. | <i>Elaeodendron-glaucum</i>  |   | <i>Chilru</i>              | Gochar               | Tree  |
|     |                              |   | X <i>Combretaceae</i>      |                      |       |
| 26. | <i>Anogeissus latifolia</i>  |   | <i>Chhal</i>               | All misc.<br>forests | Tree  |
| 27. | <i>Terminalia Arjuna</i>     |   | <i>Arjun</i>               | Lehru Palsed         | Tree  |
| 28. | <i>Terminalia belerica</i>   |   | <i>Behara</i>              | All misc.<br>forests | Tree  |
| 29. | <i>Terminalia Chebulla</i>   |   | <i>Harar</i>               | Nihari (rare)        | Tree  |
| 30. | <i>Terminalia Tomentosa</i>  |   | <i>Alson</i>               | Rare                 | Tree  |

| XI Convolvulaceae                  |  |                      |
|------------------------------------|--|----------------------|
| 31. <i>Cuscuta reflexa</i>         | <i>Akas Bel</i>                            | Everywhere           |
| 32. <i>Porana paniculata</i>       | <i>Massala</i>                             | All misc. forests    |
| XII Pioscoreaceae                  |  |                      |
| 33. <i>Dioscorea belophylla</i>    | <i>Tarari</i>                              | Naina Devi           |
| 34. <i>Dioscorea Deltoidea</i>     | <i>Khitha</i>                              | "                    |
| 35. <i>Dioscorea Pentaphylla</i>   | <i>Dregal</i>                              | Gochar, all forests  |
| 36. <i>Diospyros montana</i>       | <i>XIII Ebenaceae</i><br><i>Kali Chhal</i> | All misc. forests    |
| XIV Euphorbiaceae                  |  |                      |
| 37. <i>Pridelia retusa</i>         | <i>Gaj</i>                                 | Shrub                |
| 38. <i>Euphorbia Royleana</i>      | <i>Chhoi, Thohar</i>                       | Naina Devi, Bandla   |
| 39. <i>Jatropha Curcas</i>         | <i>Jablota</i>                             | Everywhere in hedges |
| 40. <i>Mallotus philippinensis</i> | <i>Kamal</i>                               | All forests          |
| 41. <i>Phyllanthus Amblica</i>     | <i>Amla</i>                                | Rahan and Naina Devi |
| 42. <i>Sapium insigne</i>          | <i>Balodhar</i>                            | "                    |
|                                    |  | Glaborous shrub      |

| 1   | 2                                 | 3 | 4                        | 5                    | 6     |
|-----|-----------------------------------|---|--------------------------|----------------------|-------|
|     |                                   |   | <b>XV Gramineae</b>      |                      |       |
| 43. | <i>Aristida depressa</i>          |   | <i>Lanbatu</i>           |                      | Grass |
| 44. | <i>Bambusa arundinarea</i>        |   | <i>Mangar</i>            |                      | "     |
| 45. | <i>Botheriocheoa intermedia</i>   |   | <i>Palman</i>            |                      | "     |
| 46. | <i>Chrysopogon montanus</i>       |   | <i>Dhauulu</i>           |                      | "     |
| 47. | <i>Gymopogon marthi</i>           |   | <i>Khawi</i>             |                      | "     |
| 48. | <i>Gynodon decydon</i>            |   | <i>Khabbal</i>           |                      | "     |
| 49. | <i>Dandrocalamus Hamiltonii</i>   |   | <i>Nal</i>               |                      | Tree  |
| 50. | <i>Dendrocalamus strictus</i>     |   | Bamboo                   |                      |       |
| 51. | <i>Eriophorum-comosum</i>         |   | "                        | Naina Devi, Kot Dhar | "     |
| 52. | <i>Hetropogon contortus</i>       |   | <i>Ghor Bagar</i>        | All forests          | Grass |
| 53. | <i>Ischaemum angustifolium</i>    |   | <i>Sariala</i>           |                      | "     |
| 54. | <i>Saccharum munja</i>            |   | <i>Bagar</i>             |                      | "     |
| 55. | <i>Themeda anathera</i>           |   | <i>Surar</i>             |                      | "     |
|     |                                   |   | <i>Alunji</i>            |                      | "     |
|     |                                   |   | <b>XVI Illicaceae</b>    |                      |       |
| 56. | <i>Ilex-diphyrena</i>             |   |                          | Bahadurpur           | Shrub |
|     |                                   |   | <b>XVII Juglandaceae</b> |                      |       |
| 57. | <i>Engelhardtia Colebrookiana</i> |   | <i>Sama</i>              |                      | Tree  |

|                                       |               |                           |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|---------------------------|
| XVIII Labiales                        |               |                           |
| 58. <i>Colebrookia oppositifolia</i>  | Doos          | Kot Dhar, Shrub           |
| 59. <i>Pogostemon plectranthoides</i> | Barmera       | Naina Devi "              |
| XIX Lauraceae                         |               |                           |
| 60. <i>Litsea Chitensis</i>           | Rehan         | Osai                      |
| XX Leguminosae                        |               |                           |
| 61. <i>Abrus precatorius</i>          | Raktan        | All forests Climber       |
| 62. <i>Acacia arabica</i>             | Bubul Kikar   | Naina Devi (rare) Tree    |
| 63. <i>Acacia catechu</i>             | Khair         | All misc. forests "       |
| 64. <i>Acacia Gangeana</i>            | Bagherne      | " "                       |
| 65. <i>Acacia Leucophloea</i>         | Peur          | Rare "                    |
| 66. <i>Acacia Modesta</i>             | Phulai        | Naina Devi Small tree     |
| 67. <i>Albizia lebbek</i>             | Sirin         | Osai Jaman, Tree          |
| 68. <i>Albizzia Odoratissima</i>      | Karmaru       | Naina Devi "              |
| 69. <i>Albizia stipulate</i>          | Cheoli        | All misc. forests "       |
| 70. <i>Bauhinia Racemosa</i>          | Karyala       | Bhiao, Naina Devi "       |
| 71. <i>Bauhinia retsusa</i>           | Kural, Kandla | All forests "             |
| 72. <i>Bauhinia Vahlia</i>            | Tor           | " "                       |
| 73. <i>Butea frondosa</i>             | Dhak          | All misc. forests Climber |
|                                       |               | Tree                      |

| 1   | 2                             | 3 | 4                      | 5                 | 6       |
|-----|-------------------------------|---|------------------------|-------------------|---------|
| 74. | <i>Caesalpinia bonducella</i> |   | <i>Mechka</i>          | Scrub forests     | "       |
| 75. | <i>Caesalpinia Sepiaria</i>   |   | <i>Bara Durghar</i>    | "                 | "       |
| 76. | <i>Cassia Fistula</i>         |   | <i>Aliz</i>            | All forests       | "       |
| 77. | <i>Cassia tora</i>            |   | <i>Aihwan</i>          | Everywhere        | Herb    |
| 78. | <i>Dalbergia sissoo</i>       |   | <i>Tahli (Shisham)</i> | All misc. forests | Tree    |
| 79. | <i>Erythrina suberosa</i>     |   | <i>Pariara</i>         | Naina Devi        | Tree.   |
| 80. | <i>Indigofera pulchella</i>   |   | <i>Kathie</i>          | All Misc. forests | Shrub.  |
| 81. | <i>Millettia auriculata</i>   |   | <i>Slanga</i>          | "                 |         |
| 82. | <i>Mimosa rubicaulis</i>      |   | <i>Darghari</i>        | All forests       |         |
| 83. | <i>Ougeinia dalbergiodes</i>  |   | <i>Sanan</i>           | All Misc. forests | Climber |
| 84. | <i>Spatholobus rexburgii</i>  |   | <i>Mula mala</i>       | All Misc. forests | Tree    |
| 85. | <i>Pueraria tuberosa</i>      |   | <i>Sold</i>            |                   | Climber |
|     |                               |   | XXI Liliaceae          |                   |         |
| 86. | <i>Asparagus racemosus</i>    |   | <i>Sanshal</i>         | All forests       | Shrub   |
| 87. | <i>Smilax Parvifolia</i>      |   |                        | "                 | "       |
|     |                               |   | XXII Linaceae          |                   |         |
| 88. | <i>Reinwardtia Trigyna</i>    |   | <i>Asant</i>           | Everywhere        | Shrub   |



|                             |                              |                  |                               |         |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------|---------|
| XXIII <i>Loranthaceae</i>   |                              |                  |                               |         |
| 89.                         | <i>Loranthus longiflorus</i> | Kang             | All forests                   | Flower  |
| 90.                         | <i>Machilus Duthiei</i>      |                  | Bahadurpur                    | Tree    |
| 91.                         | <i>Woodfordia floribunda</i> |                  | All Misc. forests             | "       |
| XXIV <i>Lythraceae</i>      |                              |                  |                               |         |
|                             |                              | Dhamin           |                               |         |
| XXV <i>Mahaceae</i>         |                              |                  |                               |         |
| 92.                         | <i>Bombax malabaricum</i>    | Silk cotton tree | Naina Devi                    | "       |
| 93.                         | <i>Kydia calycina</i>        | Poola            | "                             | "       |
| XXVI <i>Meliaceae</i>       |                              |                  |                               |         |
| 94.                         | <i>Azadirachta indica</i>    | Neem             | Kot Kahlur                    | Tree    |
| 95.                         | <i>Cedrela</i>               | Common Tuni      | Osat Jaman<br>Naina Devi      | "       |
| XXVII <i>Menispermaceae</i> |                              |                  |                               |         |
| 96.                         | <i>Cissampelos Pareira</i>   | Bhaithudu        | All Misc. and<br>chil forests | Climber |
| 97.                         | <i>Cocculus laurifolius</i>  | Paror            | Tina                          | Tree    |
| 98.                         | <i>Tinospora cordifolia</i>  | Guligloe         | All Misc. and<br>chil forests |         |

| 1    | 2                               | 3           | 4                          | 5                           | 6         |
|------|---------------------------------|-------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------|
|      |                                 |             | XXVIII <i>Moringaceae</i>  |                             |           |
| 99.  | <i>Moringa Pterygosperma</i>    |             | <i>Rasumza</i>             | All Misc.<br>forests (rare) |           |
|      |                                 |             | XXIX <i>Myrtaceae</i>      |                             |           |
| 100. | <i>Eugenia Caryophyllifolia</i> |             | <i>Jamnoa</i>              |                             |           |
| 101. | <i>Eugenia Jambolana</i>        | Wild Medlar | <i>Jaman</i>               | Kot Dhar<br>Naina Devi      | Tree      |
|      |                                 |             | XXX <i>Oleaceae</i>        |                             |           |
| 102. | <i>Jasminum humile</i>          |             | <i>Ban Malit</i>           | Tiamlu,<br>Naina Devi       | Shrub     |
| 103. | <i>Hycatanthes Arbortris</i>    |             | <i>Koori</i>               | All Misc.<br>forests        | Brushwood |
| 104. | <i>Olea cuspidata</i>           | Wild Olive  | <i>Kahu</i>                |                             | Tree      |
|      |                                 |             | XXXI <i>Palmea</i>         |                             |           |
| 105. | <i>Phoenix humilis</i>          |             | <i>Khajur</i>              | Fatehpur, Chalawa           |           |
|      |                                 |             | XXXII <i>Ranunculaceae</i> |                             |           |
| 106. | <i>Clematis gouriana</i>        |             | <i>Chaibru</i>             | All Misc. forests           | Climber   |
| 107. | <i>Clematis nutans</i>          |             | <i>Nakchhikani</i>         |                             | Shrub     |

XXXIII *Rhamnaceae*

108. *Rhamnus Dahuricus* Rack thorn  
109. *Zizyphus Jujuba*  
110. *Zizyphus nummularia*  
111. *Zizyphus oenopia*

" " Shrub  
" " Tree  
" " Brushwood  
" " Climber

*Kokla Ber*

XXXIV *Rosaceae*

112. *Pyrus pashia*  
113. *Rubus niveus*

" " Shrub  
" " "

*Kanth*  
*Akha*

XXXV *Rubiaceae*

114. *Leptodermis lanceolata*  
115. *Mitragyna Parvifolia* or  
*Stephegyne parvifolia*  
116. *Randia Dnmetorum*  
117. *Wendlandia exserti*

" " "  
" " "  
" " "  
" " "

*Padari*  
*Kalam*  
  
*Rara*  
*Ratela*

XXXVI *Rutaceae*

118. *Aegle Marmelos*  
119. *Limonia acidissima*  
120. *Murraya exotica*  
121. *Murraya Koentzei*

" " "  
All Misc. forests Tree  
" " "  
" " Brushwood

*Bill*  
*Barnah*  
*Pipli*  
*Gandhela*

| 1    | 2                            | 3      | 4                          | 5                          | 6     |
|------|------------------------------|--------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-------|
|      |                              |        | XXXXVII <i>Salicaceae</i>  |                            |       |
|      |                              |        | <i>Beuns</i>               |                            |       |
| 122. | <i>Salix tetrasperma</i>     |        |                            | Kot Dhar,                  |       |
| 123. | <i>Populus ciliata</i>       | Poplar |                            | Jhanjhar                   | Tree  |
|      |                              |        |                            | Bahadurpur                 |       |
| 124. | <i>Casearia tomentosa</i>    |        | XXXXVIII <i>Somydaceae</i> |                            |       |
|      |                              |        | <i>Goela</i>               | All Misc. forests          | "     |
|      |                              |        | XXXXIX <i>Sepiadaceae</i>  |                            |       |
| 125. | <i>Dodonaea Viscosa</i>      |        | <i>Mendu</i>               | " "                        | Shrub |
| 126. | <i>Schleicheria trifuga</i>  |        | <i>Ritha</i>               | Lehri Palsed               |       |
| 127. | <i>Sapindus Mukorossi</i>    |        |                            | Dodan, planted in villages | Tree  |
|      |                              |        | XL <i>Sapotaceae</i>       |                            |       |
| 128. | <i>Bassia Latifolia</i>      |        | <i>Mahuva</i>              | Naina Devi, Jajjar         | "     |
| 129. | <i>Dispyros Cordifolia</i>   |        | <i>Dakanan</i>             | All misc. forests          | "     |
|      |                              |        | XLI <i>Solanaceae</i>      |                            |       |
| 130. | <i>Solanum verbazifolium</i> |        |                            | Everywhere                 | Shrub |
|      |                              |        | XLII <i>Sterculiaceae</i>  |                            |       |
| 131. | <i>Helicteris Isore</i>      |        | <i>Moror-phali</i>         | Bhakra, Palsed             |       |

| XLIII <i>Thymelaeaceae</i> |                                | Tree                           |                   |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| 132.                       | <i>Dephne Canabina</i>         |                                |                   |
| 133.                       | <i>Grewia Elastica</i>         |                                |                   |
| 134.                       | <i>Grewia oppositifolia</i>    |                                |                   |
| XLIV <i>Tiliaceae</i>      |                                |                                |                   |
|                            | <i>Beul</i>                    | All misc. forests              |                   |
|                            | "                              | "                              | "                 |
|                            | "                              | "                              | "                 |
| XLV <i>Urticaceae</i>      |                                |                                |                   |
|                            | <i>Khirk</i>                   | Kot Dhar                       | "                 |
|                            | <i>Ber</i>                     | All misc. forests              | "                 |
|                            | <i>Gullar</i>                  | "                              | "                 |
|                            | <i>Dogla</i>                   | "                              | "                 |
|                            | <i>Pipal</i>                   | "                              | "                 |
|                            | <i>Tiamli</i>                  | "                              | "                 |
|                            | <i>Plakhan</i>                 | "                              | "                 |
|                            | <i>Toot</i>                    | "                              | "                 |
|                            |                                | Naina Devi, Jhanjhar           | "                 |
| XLVI <i>Verbenaceae</i>    |                                |                                |                   |
|                            | <i>Matia</i>                   | Osai, Jaman                    |                   |
|                            | <i>Munbar</i>                  | Meli (Naina Devi)              |                   |
|                            | <i>Pardesi Buti</i>            | Naina Devi, Kot Dhar, Jhanjhar | Shrub             |
|                            | <i>Bakar</i>                   | "                              |                   |
|                            | <i>Sogwan</i>                  | Jhanjhar                       |                   |
|                            | <i>Rana</i>                    | Naina Devi, Kot Dhar           | Shrub, small tree |
| 144.                       | <i>Clerodendron infornatum</i> |                                |                   |
| 145.                       | <i>Gmelina arborea</i>         |                                |                   |
| 146.                       | <i>Lantana camara</i>          |                                |                   |
| 147.                       | <i>Premna latifolia</i>        |                                |                   |
| 148.                       | <i>Teetorn grandis</i>         |                                |                   |
| 149.                       | <i>Vitex Negundo</i>           |                                |                   |

Belt No. 2 (900-1,500 metres)

| 1  | 2                                  | 3                 | 4   | 5                    | 6          |
|----|------------------------------------|-------------------|---|----------------------|------------|
|    |                                    |                   | <b>I Anacardiaceae</b>                    |                      |            |
| 1. | <i>Rhus Cotinus</i>                |                   | <i>Tung</i>                               | Bahadurpur           | Small tree |
| 2. | <i>Berberis aristata</i>           | Wild berry        | <b>II Berberidaceae</b><br><i>Kasmale</i> | Chalhail, Bahadurpur | Shrub      |
| 3. | <i>Lonicera-quina puelocularis</i> |                   | <b>III Caprifoliaceae</b><br>Honey Suckle | Bahadurpur           | "          |
| 4. | <i>Viburnum cotinifolium</i>       |                   |   | "                    | "          |
| 5. | <i>Pinus longifolia</i>            | Fir (long leaved) | <b>IV Coniferae</b><br><i>Chil</i>        | All Chil forests     | Tree       |
| 6. | <i>Quercus incana</i>              |                   | <b>V Gumuliferae</b><br>Hoary oak         | Bahadurpur           | "          |
| 7. | <i>Pieris Ovalifolia</i>           |                   | <b>VI Epicaceae</b>                       |                      | "          |
| 8. | <i>Rhododendron arboreum</i>       |                   | <i>Brass</i>                              | "                    | "          |
| 9. | <i>Sarcococca saligna</i>          |                   | <b>VII Hypericaceae</b>                   | "                    | "          |

| VIII Hynericaceae |                                |             | Bahadurpur           | Tree       |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|-------------|----------------------|------------|
| 10.               | <i>Hypericum cernuum</i>       |             |                      |            |
| IX Itaceae        |                                |             | Bahadurpur           | Tree       |
| 11.               | <i>Vitis semicordata</i>       |             |                      |            |
| X Lauraceae       |                                |             | Bahadurpur           | Tree       |
| 12.               | <i>Machilus Duthiei</i>        |             |                      |            |
| XI Leguminosae    |                                |             | Bahadurpur           | Tree       |
| 13.               | <i>Desmodium tiliacifolium</i> |             |                      |            |
| XII Lythraceae    |                                |             | Bahadurpur           | Tree       |
| 14.               | <i>Punica Granatum</i>         | Pomegranate |                      |            |
| XIII Myrsinaceae  |                                |             | Bahadurpur, Jhanjhar | Shrub      |
| 15.               | <i>Myrsine Africana</i>        |             |                      |            |
| XIV Olaceae       |                                |             | Bahadurpur           | Small tree |
| 16.               | <i>Euonymus tingens</i>        |             |                      |            |
| XV Oleaceae       |                                |             | Bahadurpur           | Shrub      |
| 17.               | <i>Jasminum humile</i>         |             |                      |            |
| XVI Rosaceae      |                                |             | Bahadurpur           | Tree       |
| 18.               | <i>Prunus Puddum</i>           |             |                      |            |

| 1   | 2                         | 3        | 4                | 5                              | 6          |
|-----|---------------------------|----------|------------------|--------------------------------|------------|
| 19. | <i>Rosa macrophylla</i>   |          |                  | Bahadurpur, Jhanjar            | Shrub      |
| 20. | <i>Rosa Moschata</i>      |          | Kujan            | " "                            | "          |
| 21. | <i>Rubus lasiocarpus</i>  |          | Kala Akha        | " "                            | "          |
|     |                           |          | XVII Rutaceae    |                                |            |
| 22. | <i>Zanthoxylum alatum</i> |          | Timir            | Chahali, Bandla,<br>Bahadurpur | Small tree |
|     |                           |          | XVIII Salicaceae |                                |            |
| 23. | <i>Populus ciliata</i>    |          |                  | Bahadurpur                     | Tree       |
|     |                           |          | XIX Urticaceae   |                                |            |
| 24. | <i>Morus Serrata</i>      | Mulberry | Toot             | "                              | "          |



Belt No. 3 (1,500—1,900 metres)

| 1  | 2                             | 3            | 4                       | 5          | 6     |
|----|-------------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|------------|-------|
|    |                               |              | I <i>Draliaceae</i>     | Bahadurpur | Shrub |
| 1. | <i>Hedera Halix</i>           |              | II <i>Coniferae</i>     |            |       |
| 2. | <i>Cedrus deodara</i>         | Deodar       | <i>Kelon</i>            | "          | Tree  |
| 3. | <i>Pinus excelsa</i>          |              | <i>Kail</i>             | "          | "     |
|    |                               |              | III <i>Juglandaceae</i> |            |       |
| 4. | <i>Juglans regia</i>          | Walnut       | <i>Khor</i>             | "          | "     |
|    |                               |              | IV <i>Saxifragaceae</i> |            |       |
| 5. | <i>Deutzia corymbosa</i>      | Wild syringe |                         | "          | Shrub |
|    |                               |              | V <i>Rosaceae</i>       |            |       |
| 6. | <i>Cotoneaster bacillaris</i> |              | <i>Rionsh</i>           | "          | "     |
| 7. | <i>Prinsepia utilis</i>       |              |                         | "          | "     |

## APPENDIX II

## FAUNA\*

## Wild Animals

(Please see page 30)

| Sl. No. | Scientific name                 | English Name                | Hindi or Local Name    | Altitudinal range (metres) |
|---------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1.      | 2                               | 3                           | 4                      | 5                          |
| 1.      | <i>Cervus muntjak</i>           | Goral                       | Pij, ban-bakri, ghoral |                            |
| 2.      | <i>Cervus muntjak</i>           | Barking deer                | Kakkar.                | 1,900                      |
| 3.      | <i>Cervus unicolor</i>          | Sambhar                     | Sambhar.               |                            |
| 4.      | <i>Lepus ruficaudatus</i>       | Common Indian hare          |                        |                            |
| 5.      | <i>Reles (Bengalensis)</i>      | Leopard Cat                 | Chit to-billo          |                            |
| 6.      | <i>Viverra paradoxurus-gray</i> | Himalayan Palm Civet        | Dakoni                 |                            |
| 7.      | <i>Felis Pardus</i>             | Leopard, Panther            | Chitta                 |                            |
| 8.      | <i>Mustela flacigula</i>        | Pine Marten                 | Chitorala              |                            |
| 9.      | <i>Susleristatus</i>            | Indian Wild Boar            | Suar                   |                            |
| 10.     | <i>Pteromysoral</i>             | Large brown flying squirrel | Ban                    |                            |
| 11.     | <i>Manxisaaurita</i>            | Hill Pangolian              | Sargal                 |                            |
| 12.     | <i>Crocodilus Palustris</i>     | Crocodile                   | Magar                  |                            |

| 1   | 2  | 3                        | 5               | 6            |
|-----|--|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| 13. | <i>Felis Chaus</i>                                   | Jungle Cat               | <i>Bambilla</i> | Up to 1,900  |
| 14. | <i>Herpestes auropunctatus</i>                       | Small Indian mongoose    | <i>Neola</i>    | Lower ranges |
| 15. | <i>Herpestes smithi</i>                              | Common Indian mongoose,, |                 |              |
| 16. | <i>Canis aureus</i>                                  | Jackal                   | <i>Giddar</i>   |              |
| 17. | <i>Lutra velgaris</i>                                | Common Otter             | <i>Udbila</i>   |              |
| 18. | <i>Macacus rhesus</i>                                | Bengal monkey            | <i>Bandar</i>   |              |
|     |  | Rhesus monkey            |                 |              |
| 19. | <i>Pteropus medius</i>                               | Indian Fruit Bat         | <i>Badar</i>    |              |
| 20. | <i>Hystrix bucuca</i>                                | Indian porcupine         | <i>Syal</i>     | Up to 1,900  |
| 21. | <i>Sciurus Indicus</i>                               | Squirrel                 | <i>Galehu</i>   |              |
| 22. | <i>Mus</i> (Whole family)                            | Rats and mice            | <i>Chuha</i>    |              |
| 23. | <i>Hyaena striate</i>                                | Hyena                    | <i>Tarkh</i>    |              |
| 24. | <i>Semno pithecus</i> or <i>Presbytes schistaeus</i> | Langur                   | <i>Langur</i>   |              |

## Birds

| 1   | 2   | 3                                   | 4                              | 5                       |
|-----|---|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1.  | <i>Crocopus pheeni copterus</i>                           | Green Pigeon                        | Kabutar                        | Throughout the district |
| 2.  | <i>Puca atra-atra</i>                                     | Common Coot                         | Khuskal, kali-murgabi          | Up to 1,900             |
| 3.  | <i>Anthropoides virgo</i>                                 | Demoiselle Crane                    | Karkaru, choota kunj           | Very rare Migrant       |
| 4.  | <i>Venellus venellus</i>                                  | Lawping pee-wit or<br>Green Plover  | Bodhur or Tatiri               | Up to 1,20 m            |
| 5.  | <i>Capella gallinago</i>                                  | Common Snipe                        | Jalakri                        | Very rare               |
| 6.  | <i>Tadorna-tadorna</i>                                    | Sheldrake                           | Safed chakwa, sefed<br>surkhab |                         |
| 7.  | <i>Casarca ferruginea</i>                                 | Ruddy Sheldrake or<br>Brahminy Duck | Surkhab, chakwa                | Migrant                 |
| 8.  | <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i><br><i>Platyrhynchos limaeus</i> | Mallard                             | Nillsir, nilrugi               | "                       |
| 9.  | <i>Chaulelasumus streperus</i>                            | Gadwall                             | Mila, Bhur                     | "                       |
| 10. | <i>Marecupenelope</i>                                     | Wigeon                              | Peasan, Patari                 | "                       |
| 11. | <i>Nettion crecca</i>                                     | Common tial                         | " "                            | "                       |
| 12. | <i>Dafila acuta</i>                                       | Pin tail                            | Sanh                           | "                       |
| 13. | <i>Onturnix, conturnix</i><br><i>conturnix communis</i>   | Common Quail                        | Bater                          |                         |

|     |                                  |   |             |
|-----|----------------------------------|---|-------------|
| 14. | <i>Conturnix-cormandelica</i>    | Black-breasted or<br>rain quail         | Up to 1,900 |
| 15. | <i>Crus</i>                      | Eastern Crane                           |             |
| 16. | <i>Pavo cristatus</i>            | Common Peafowl                          | Up to 1,500 |
| 17. | <i>Gallus bajkiva</i>            | Common Red jungle-<br>fowl              |             |
| 18. | <i>Gallus</i>                    | Chir pheasant                           |             |
| 19. | <i>Gallus</i>                    | White-crested kalij                     | Up to 1,900 |
| 20. | <i>Alectoris gracca graca</i>    | Chukor                                  | " "         |
| 21. | <i>Frankolinus frankolinus</i>   | Black partridge                         | " "         |
| 22. | <i>Frankolinus-pondicerianus</i> | Grey partridge                          | Up to 450   |
| 23. | <i>Rumix assamieri</i>           | Little Button Quail                     | Up to 1,900 |
| 24. | <i>Streptopelia orientalis</i>   | Rufous, Turtle-Dove                     | " "         |
| 25. | <i>Columba-palumbus</i>          | Eastern wood-pigeon<br>or Ring Dove     | " "         |
| 26. | <i>Streptopelia chinensis</i>    | Indian spotted Dove                     | " "         |
| 27. | <i>Carpodacus</i>                | Himalayan Night Jar                     |             |
| 28. | <i>Halcyon asiaticus</i>         | Pallas fishing Eagle                    |             |
| 29. | <i>Ichthyophaga humilis</i>      | Himalayan grey-<br>headed fishing Eagle |             |
| 30. | <i>Corvus leavillanti</i>        | Himalayan Jugle crow                    | Up to 1,900 |

| 1   | 2                              | 3                               | 4                                | 5           |
|-----|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------|
| 31. | <i>Corvus splendens</i>        | House crow                      | Kowa                             |             |
| 32. | <i>Phalacrocorax carpo</i>     | Indian large cormorant          | Pancowa                          |             |
| 33. | <i>Psittacula eupatria</i>     | Large Indian parakeet           | Tota                             |             |
| 34. | <i>Psittacula krameri</i>      | Rose-ringed parakeet            |                                  |             |
| 35. | <i>Psittacula himalayana</i>   | Himalayan slaty-headed parakeet | Tota                             | Up to 1,900 |
| 36. | <i>Astur gentilis schedowi</i> | Eastern Goshawk                 | Male (Zooru)<br>Female (Baz)     |             |
| 37. | <i>Astur badius</i>            | Shikra or Brown-hawk            | Chepku (Male)<br>Shikra (Female) |             |

## Migratory Birds

| Sr. No. | Scientific Name                                      | English Name                           | Altitudinal range (metres) |
|---------|--|--|----------------------------|
| 1       | 2  | 3                                      | 4                          |
| 1.      | <i>Corvus macrorhynchos intermedius</i> (Adams)      | Himalayan Jungle Crow                  | Up to 1,900                |
| 2.      | <i>Uroecissa erythorhyncha ucciptalis</i> (Blyth)    | Red-billed Blue Magpie                 | 600 to 1,900               |
| 3.      | <i>Dendrocitta cagabunda</i> (Lath)                  | Tree pie                               | " "                        |
| 4.      | <i>Nucifraga caryocotactes hemispila</i> (Vigors)    | Himalayan nut-cracker                  | 900-1,900                  |
| 5.      | <i>Lophophanes rufonuchalis</i> (Blyth)              | Simla Black Tit                        | At high altitudes          |
| 6.      | <i>Maclolophus xanthogenys</i> (Vigors)              | Yellow-browed Tit                      |                            |
| 7.      | <i>Garrulax albogularis whistleri</i> (Stuart Baker) | Western White-throated Laughing Thrush |                            |
| 8.      | <i>Trochalopteron variegatum variegatum</i> (Vigors) | Eastern Variegated Laughing Thrush     |                            |
| 9.      | <i>Siva strigula</i> (Hodgs)                         | S ripe-throated Siva                   |                            |
| 10.     | <i>Pleruthius erythropterus</i> (Vigors)             | Red-winged Shrike-babbler              | 920—1,900                  |
| 11.     | <i>Molastes Leucogenysleucognys</i> (Gray)           | White checked Bulbul                   | " "                        |
| 12.     | <i>Certhia himalayana himalayana</i> (Vigors)        | Himalayan Tree-creeper                 | Up to 1,900                |
| 13.     | <i>Sacicola caprata bicolor</i> (Sykes)              | Pied Bush-Chat                         | Up to 1,900                |

| 1   | 2   | 3                                | 4                            |
|-----|---|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 14. | <i>Saxicola torquata indica</i><br>(Blyth)                      | Indian Bush-Chat                 | 600 1,900                    |
| 15. | <i>Oreicola ferrea ferrea</i><br>(Gray)                         | Dark-Grey Bush Chat              |                              |
| 16. | <i>Oenatthe pleschanka</i><br><i>pleschanka</i> (Lepschin)      | Pied Chat                        | 1,200 „                      |
| 17. | <i>Enicurus maculatus</i><br><i>maculatus</i> (Vigors)          | Western spotted-Forktail         | 1,200 „                      |
| 18. | <i>Phoenicurus frontlais</i><br>(Virots)                        | Blue fronted Redstart            | 1,200 „                      |
| 19. | <i>Monticola rufiventris</i><br>(Jard)                          | Chestnut-bellied, Rock<br>thrush | „ „                          |
| 20. | <i>Myophonus temmlackii</i><br>(Vigors)                         | Himalayan Whistling-Thrush       | From foot-<br>hills to 1,900 |
| 21. | <i>Prunella strophista</i><br><i>Jerdoni</i> (Brooks)           | Jerdon's Ancestor                | „ „                          |
| 22. | <i>Hemichelidon sibirica-</i><br><i>gulmergi</i> (Stuart Baker) | Kashmir Sooty (Flycatcher)       |                              |
| 23. | <i>Alseonax ruficaudatus</i><br>(Swains)                        | Flycatcher                       |                              |
| 24. | <i>Culicicapa ceylonensis</i><br><i>pallidior.</i> (Ticehurst)  | Simla grey-headed<br>Flycatcher  | 900 to 1,900                 |
| 25. | <i>Lanius shach erythronotus</i><br>(Vigors.)                   | Rufous-backed Shrike             | „ „                          |
| 26. | <i>Dicrurus longicaudatus</i><br>(Hay).                         | Indian Grey Dronogo              | „ „                          |
| 27. | <i>Phylloscopus affinis</i> (Tick).                             | Tickell's Willow- Warbler        | „ „                          |
| 28. | <i>Pholloscopus trochiloides</i><br><i>Ludlowi</i> (Whistler)   | Dull Green Willow-<br>Warbler    | „ „                          |



| 1   | 2  | 3                                 | 4                             |
|-----|--|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 29. | <i>Seicercus xanthoschistos</i><br>(Gray)                | Grey headed Flycatcher<br>Warbler | From foothills<br>Up to 1,900 |
| 30. | <i>Horornis Pallidus</i> (Brooks).                       | Pale Bush-Warbler                 |                               |
| 3   | <i>Suya crinigera erinigera</i><br>(Hodgs)               | Brown Hill-Warbler                | 960 ..                        |
| 32. | <i>Oriolus oriolus kundoo</i><br>(Sykes)                 | Golden Oriole                     | Up to 1,900                   |
| 33. | <i>Acridotheres tristis tristis</i><br>(L)               | Common Mynah                      | .. ..                         |
| 34. | <i>Pyrrhula erythrocephala</i><br>(Vigors)               | Red-headed Balifinch              | 1,200 1,900                   |
| 35. | <i>Hypacanthis spinoides</i><br>(Vigors)                 | Himalayan Green Finch             | Upto 1,900                    |
| 36. | <i>Passer domesticus indicus</i><br>(Jard)               | Indian House-sparrow              | .. ..                         |
| 37. | <i>Fringilauda nemoricola</i><br><i>altaica</i> (Eversm) | Stoliczka's Mountain-<br>Finch    | .. ..                         |
| 38. | <i>Emberiza fucata arcauta</i><br>(Sharpe)               | Indian Grey-headed<br>Bunting     | From foothills<br>Upto 1,900  |
| 39. | <i>Emberiza stewarti</i> (Blyth).                        | White-capped Bunting              | .. ..                         |
| 40. | <i>Emberizacia stracheyi</i><br>(Moore)                  | Eastern Meadow-<br>Bunting        | .. ..                         |
| 41. | <i>Hirundo daurica nepalensis</i><br>(Hedgs)             | Hodgson's Striated<br>Swallow     | 900 1,900                     |
| 42. | <i>Motacilla alba personata</i> ..<br>(Gould)            | Masked Wagtail                    | 600 1,900                     |
| 43. | <i>Motacilla alba alboides</i><br>(Hodgs)                | Hodgson's Wagtail                 | .. ..                         |
| 44. | <i>Oreocorys sykvanus</i><br>(Hodgs)                     | Upland pipit                      | ..                            |

| 1   | 2   | 3                               | 4                          |
|-----|---|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 45. | <i>Zosterops palpebrosa</i> (Temm)              | White-eye                       | Up to 1,900                |
| 46. | <i>Climacteris asiatica</i> (Lath)              | Purple Sunbird                  | " "                        |
| 47. | <i>Picus squamatus squamatus</i> (Vigors)       | Scaly-breasted Green Woodpecker | Above 1,500                |
| 48. | <i>Dryobates himalayensis</i> (Jard and Selby)  | Western Himalayan Woodpecker    | 750 1,900                  |
| 49. | <i>Dryobates auriceps</i> (Vigors)              | Brown-fronted pied Woodpecker   | " "                        |
| 50. | <i>Megalaima visens marshallianus</i> (Swinhoe) | Great Himalayan Barbet          | From foothills Up to 1,900 |
| 51. | <i>Cuculus canorus canorus</i> L                | Common Cuckoo                   | " "                        |
| 52. | <i>Cuculus optatus</i> (Gould)                  | Himalayan Cuckoo                | " "                        |
| 53. | <i>Heterococcyx sparveroides</i> (Vigors)       | Large Hawk Cuckoo               | 600 1,900                  |
| 54. | <i>Psittacula cyanocephala</i> (L)              | Blossom-headed Paroquet         | " "                        |
| 55. | <i>Psittacula schisticeps</i> (Hodgs)           | —                               | Up to 1,500                |
| 56. | <i>Upupa epops</i> (L)                          | Hoopoe                          | " "                        |
| 57. | <i>Micropus apus</i> (L)                        | Common swift                    | " "                        |
| 58. | <i>Strix mivivola</i> (Blyth)                   | Himalayan Wood-Owl              | Above 1,200                |
| 59. | <i>Otus spilocephalus</i> (Blyth)               | Spotted Scops Owl               | " "                        |
| 60. | <i>Gyps himalayensis</i> (Hume)                 | Himalayan Vulture               |                            |
| 61. | <i>Neophron percnopterus</i> (L)                | White Scavenger Vulture         |                            |
| 62. | <i>Gypaetus barbatus</i> (L)                    | Bearded Vulture                 | " "                        |

| 1   | 2  | 3                         | 4           |
|-----|--|---------------------------|-------------|
| 63. | <i>Galeo subbuteo</i> (L.)                               | Hobby                     |             |
| 64. | <i>Falco tinnunculus</i><br><i>tinnunculus</i> (L.)      |                           | 750—1,900   |
| 65. | <i>Mulvus migrans</i> (Bodd)                             | Common Pariah Kite        |             |
| 66. | <i>Accipiter nisus</i><br><i>melanoschistos</i> , (Hume) | Indian Sparrow Hawk       |             |
| 67. | <i>Sphenocercus</i> -3 (Vigors)                          | Wedge-tailed Green Pigeon |             |
| 68. | <i>Columba livia</i> (Gmel)                              | Blue Rock Pigeon          | 1,500—1,900 |
| 69. | <i>Streptopelia orientalis</i><br><i>meena</i> (Sykes)   | Indian Rufous turtle dove | Up to 1,900 |
| 70. | <i>Dendrotreron hodgsoni</i><br>(Vigors)                 | Speckled Wood Pigeon      |             |
| 71. | <i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i>                         | Little Brown Dove         | " "         |
| 72. | <i>Catreus wallichii</i> (Hardw)                         | Cheer pheasant            | " "         |

## Fish

| Sl. No. | Scientific name                          | English name     | Local name   | Altitudinal range |                   |
|---------|--|------------------|--------------|-------------------|-------------------|
|         |  |                  |              | Below 1,200 m     | 1,200 m and above |
| 1       | 2  | 3                | 4            | 5                 | 6                 |
| 1.      | <i>Barbus (or) putitora</i>              | Mahsir           | Mahsir       | Yes               | —                 |
| 2.      | <i>Labeo dero</i>                        | —                | Gid          | „                 | —                 |
| 3.      | <i>Labeo dyocheilus</i>                  | —                | Kuni         |                   | —                 |
| 4.      | <i>Garra lamta</i>                       | —                | Kurka, Huska | „                 | —                 |
| 5.      | <i>Barilus bedelisis</i>                 | —                | Chihoa       | „                 | —                 |
| 6.      | <i>Cyprinus carpio</i>                   | Mirror carp      | Mirror carp  | „                 | Yes               |
| 7.      | <i>Oreinus plagiastomus plagiastomus</i> | Himalayan barbel | Saloh/Gongli | „                 | „                 |

**Reptiles**

| Sl. No. | Scientific name          | English name | Local Name            |
|---------|--------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| 1       | 2                        | 3            | 4                     |
| 1.      | <i>Naja Tripudians</i>   | Cobra        | <i>Kharpe</i>         |
| 2.      | —                        | —            | <i>Sankh Chore</i>    |
| 3.      | —                        | —            | <i>Tatir</i>          |
| 4.      | —                        | —            | <i>Bains</i>          |
| 5.      | —                        | —            | <i>otar (Do maha)</i> |
| 6.      | <i>Bungarus Chudidus</i> | Karait       | <i>Sotar</i>          |
| 7.      | —                        | —            | <i>Nag</i>            |
| 8.      | —                        | Rock lizard  | —                     |
| 9.      | —                        | Leeches      | —                     |

## APPENDIX III

(See page 406)

LIST OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE  
DISTRICT

## Higher secondary schools

- |                     |            |
|---------------------|------------|
| 1. Kandror          | 5. Bharari |
| 2. Bilaspur (girls) | 6. Hatwar  |
| 3. Swahn            | 7. Talai   |
| 4. Ghamarwin        | 8. Barthin |

## High schools

- |                    |               |
|--------------------|---------------|
| 1. Bilaspur (boys) | 10. Kapahra   |
| 2. Panjgain        | 11. Chalabli  |
| 3. Jukhala         | 12. Gherwin   |
| 4. Namol           | 13. Aur       |
| 5. Saloa           | 14. Talyana   |
| 6. Bassi           | 15. Jhandutta |
| 7. Jagatkhana      | 16. Kalol     |
| 8. Kuthera         | 17. Salwar    |
| 9. Dadhol          |               |

## Middle schools

- |                  |               |
|------------------|---------------|
| 1. Rajpura       | 5. Ghagas     |
| 2. Raghunathpura | 6. Rani Kotla |
| 3. Deoth         | 7. Chandpur   |
| 4. Suldha        | 8. Bandla     |

- |                       |                  |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| 9. Bahot Kasol        | 33. Gahan        |
| 10. Charol            | 34. Domehar      |
| 11. Behal             | 35. Talwara      |
| 12. Toba              | 36. Kothi        |
| 13. Bhakra            | 37. Hawan        |
| 14. Naina Devi        | 38. Malyawar     |
| 15. Tarsu             | 39. Panoh        |
| 16. Nakrana           | 40. Rishikesh    |
| 17. Majari            | 41. Danathar     |
| 18. Naila             | 42. Amarpur      |
| 19. Makri             | 43. Samoh        |
| 20. Kalar             | 44. Kul Majhewar |
| 21. Ghamarwin (girls) | 45. Bandin       |
| 22. Morsinghi         | 46. Jejwin       |
| 23. Dangar            | 47. Daslehra     |
| 24. Barota            | 48. Kosarian     |
| 25. Marhana           | 49. Gandhir      |
| 26. Panditehra        | 50. Zadukulzar   |
| 27. Nalti             | 51. Bheri        |
| 28. Meri Kathla       | 52. Badholikalan |
| 29. Galian            | 53. Jabloo       |
| 30. Chhat             | 54. Maleraon     |
| 31. Kalari            | 55. Grahan       |
| 32. Kot               | 56. Dahad        |
-

# Glossary

| Vernacular                | English                             |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <i>Arghya</i>             | Well known oblation.                |
| <i>Arhat</i>              | Commission.                         |
| <i>Arz Aarsal</i>         | Land revenue sent to treasuries.    |
| <i>Ashir bad</i>          | A blessing.                         |
| <i>Ashram</i>             | Hostel.                             |
| <i>Ayurvedic</i>          | Ancient Indian system of medicines. |
| <i>Bachh</i>              | A revenue demand.                   |
| <i>Bahuta</i>             | Amulet.                             |
| <i>Baithak</i>            | Seat.                               |
| <i>Baloo</i>              | Nose ring                           |
| <i>Balwari</i>            | Nursery, kindergarten.              |
| <i>Banda</i>              | Mortgage.                           |
| <i>Banjar</i>             | Fallow land.                        |
| <i>Barat</i>              | Wedding procession.                 |
| <i>Barni, sagai, sora</i> | Betrothal ceremonies.               |
| <i>Basna</i>              | To live.                            |
| <i>Batai</i>              | Exchange.                           |
| <i>Begar</i>              | Forced labour.                      |
| <i>Beldar</i>             | Labourer.                           |
| <i>Betwas</i>             | State officials.                    |



|                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <i>Bhajan</i>                    | Religious song.                            |
| <i>Bharla</i>                    | Inflated goat skin.                        |
| <i>Bharni</i>                    | A song.                                    |
| <i>Bhog</i>                      | Sacred food.                               |
| <i>Bhoot</i>                     | Ghost.                                     |
| <i>Bohari</i>                    | A grain measurement.                       |
| <i>Bowli</i>                     | Drinking water well.                       |
| <i>Chak</i>                      | An ornament tied to the hair by womenfolk. |
| <i>Chandan</i>                   | Sandalwood.                                |
| <i>Charanjit kalyan</i>          | A blessing.                                |
| <i>Charand</i>                   | Grazing grounds.                           |
| <i>Charas</i>                    | An intoxicant obtained from hemp.          |
| <i>Charkha</i>                   | Spinning wheel.                            |
| <i>Chatti</i>                    | An earthen pot in which milk is churned.   |
| <i>Chhinj</i>                    | A wrestling festival.                      |
| <i>Choorma</i>                   | A sweetmeat.                               |
| <i>Dehaj or daj</i>              | Dowry.                                     |
| <i>Dakhan</i>                    | South.                                     |
| <i>Daroga</i>                    | A state official.                          |
| <i>Dehati</i>                    | Undemarcated village land.                 |
| <i>Devta</i>                     | Deity.                                     |
| <i>Dhoop</i>                     | Incense, made out of a herb.               |
| <i>Faujdar</i>                   | A state army officer.                      |
| <i>Gadar, paraina and jhajra</i> | Forms of marriages.                        |
| <i>Galgai</i>                    | A citrus fruit.                            |

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| <i>Ganas</i>         | Disciples.                                |
| <i>Garasani</i>      | A consecration.                           |
| <i>Gardavari</i>     | Crop inspection.                          |
| <i>Geru</i>          | Ochre.                                    |
| <i>Ghair mumkin</i>  | Mountainous unculturable land.            |
| <i>Ghara</i>         | An earthen jar.                           |
| <i>Gharat</i>        | Water mill.                               |
| <i>Gochara</i>       | Gift.                                     |
| <i>Gohen</i>         | Cowshed.                                  |
| <i>Golu</i>          | An earthen jar.                           |
| <i>Gram</i>          | Village.                                  |
| <i>Gram sabha</i>    | Village council.                          |
| <i>Gram sahayak</i>  | Village volunteer.                        |
| <i>Gram Sevak</i>    | Male village level worker.                |
| <i>Gram sevika</i>   | Female village level worker.              |
| <i>Gufa</i>          | Cave.                                     |
| <i>Hakim</i>         | A physician of Unani system of medicines. |
| <i>Haq biswadari</i> | Right holder.                             |
| <i>Jagirdar</i>      | Owner of revenue-free land.               |
| <i>Jalsa</i>         | Fair.                                     |
| <i>Jamabandi</i>     | Crop inspection report.                   |
| <i>Jamadar</i>       | Village official.                         |
| <i>Janeo</i>         | Sacred thread borne by Hindus.            |
| <i>Jatras</i>        | Festivals.                                |

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
|                 | A ropeway for crossing the rivers, a swing.   |
| <i>Joota</i>    | Shoe.   |
| <i>Kardar</i>   | Official of the deity.                        |
| <i>Kamas</i>    | Labourers paid in kind.                       |
| <i>Karewa</i>   | Widow re-marriage.                            |
| <i>Khad</i>     | A stream.                                     |
| <i>Khalsa</i>   | A kind of land.                               |
| <i>Khansama</i> | Cook.   |
| <i>Khar</i>     | A grain measurement.                          |
| <i>Kharif</i>   | Autumn harvest.                               |
| <i>Khel</i>     | Invocation of god through a mouthpiece.       |
| <i>Khetri</i>   | A cess realised by lambardars.                |
| <i>Khind</i>    | Rags, or bedding of rags.                     |
| <i>Khot</i>     | Wrath of a deity/adulteration.                |
| <i>Kirtan</i>   | Religious chorus.                             |
| <i>Kos</i>      | Distance measurement.                         |
| <i>Kotwal</i>   | Watch and ward official.                      |
| <i>Kuhl</i>     | A water channel.                              |
| <i>Kumbh</i>    | Fair.   |
| <i>Lag</i>      | Cess.   |
| <i>Langoti</i>  | Loincloth.                                    |
| <i>Madhani</i>  | A wooden device for churning the butter-milk. |
| <i>Mahant</i>   | Priest.                                       |

*Mahada*

Protected forests.

*Mahfuja*

Reserved forests.

*Mahila mandal*

Women's council.

*Mahila samiti*

Association of women.

*Mali*

Gardner.

*Malikana*

A tribute to the owner of the land.

*Muafi*

Grant.

*Mukat*

Bridal veil.

*Mandli*

A group.

*Manjri*

A straw mat.

*Mehara*

A tenement.

*Mehr*

A state revenue official.

*Mehrana*

A state tax.

*Milni*

Meeting.

*Muharrar*

A village level official.

*Mukaddam*

A state revenue official.

*Muklawla*

Departure of bride from her parent's home.

*Murki*

Ear rings.

*Narial*

Coconut.

*Nautor.*

Virgin soil brought under cultivation.

*Nazar*

A revenue official.

*Nazarana*

A tribute, price.

*Nazr*

An offering as a token of respect.

*Neota*

Invitation.

*Palmana*

Scale.

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| <i>Palsara</i>      | A revenue official.   |
| <i>Panch</i>        | A member of the panchayat.                                      |
| <i>Panjotra</i>     | Remuneration of lambardar (5% of the total revenue collection). |
| <i>Patha</i>        | Grain measurement.  |
| <i>Pathshala</i>    | School.   |
| <i>Patra</i>        | A stool.  |
| <i>Pattans</i>      | Ferries over the rivers.  |
| <i>Pedu or peri</i> | A receptacle for foodgrains.                                    |
| <i>Pradhan</i>      | President.  |
| <i>Pratishtha</i>   | A purification ceremony.  |
| <i>Pujari</i>       | Priest.   |
| <i>Punya</i>        | Full moon day.  |
| <i>Puranmashi</i>   | Full moon day.  |
| <i>Purohit</i>      | Priest.   |
| <i>Rabi</i>         | Summer harvest.   |
| <i>Rakha</i>        | A guard.  |
| <i>Sadar</i>        | Capital.  |
| <i>Samadhi</i>      | A meditation position.  |
| <i>Samiti</i>       | Council.  |
| <i>Sammelan</i>     | Meeting.  |
| <i>Sangtra</i>      | Orange.   |
| <i>Sankrant</i>     | First day of every month of Vikrami or Saka eras.               |
| <i>Sarpanch</i>     | Chairman of the panchayat.                                      |

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| <i>Sathoi</i>         | Appraiser.   |
| <i>Sehra Bandi</i>    | Ceremony of putting up the bridal veil.                    |
| <i>Shramdan</i>       | Voluntary labour contribution.                             |
| <i>Sil-batta</i>      | Grinding stones.   |
| <i>Sohaga</i>         | Field leveller.  |
| <i>Sutak</i>          | Impurity caused by childbirth.                             |
| <i>Thakri</i>         | A grain measure.   |
| <i>Thali</i>          | A brass plate.   |
| <i>Than</i>           | A place.   |
| <i>Tilak</i>          | Vermilion sign on the forehead.                            |
| <i>Til chavali</i>    | A sweet made of sesame, rice and sugar.                    |
| <i>Toba</i>           | Tank.  |
| <i>Topi</i>           | Cap.   |
| <i>Tumba</i>          | Gourd.   |
| <i>Up-pradhan</i>     | Vice-president.  |
| <i>Van Mahotasava</i> | Forest fair, i.e. the season of planting the forest trees. |
| <i>Zaildar</i>        | A village official.  |
| <i>Zila parishad</i>  | District level village council.                            |

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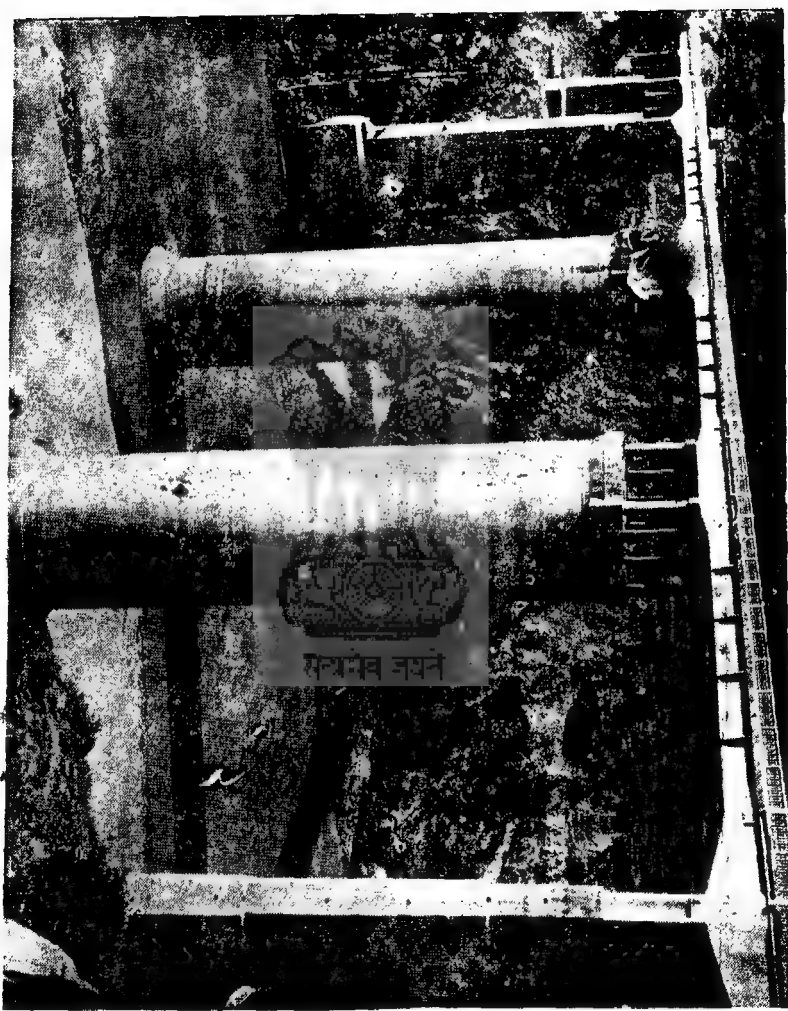
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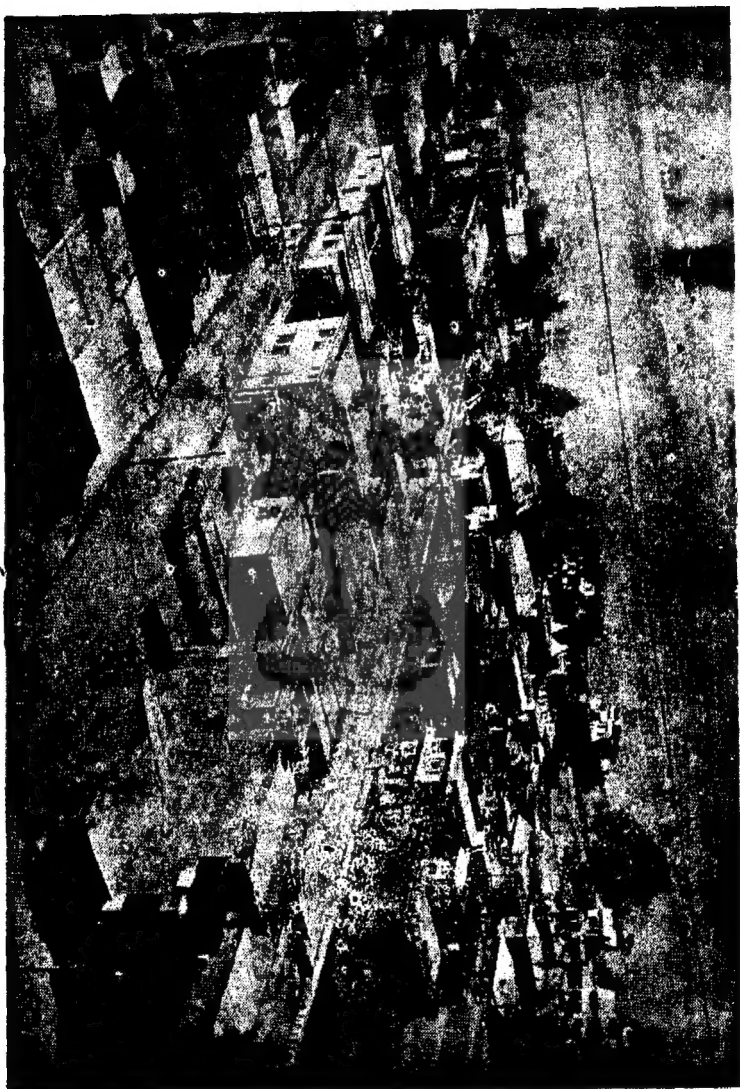




Asia's Highest Bridge, Kandror



Temple Shri Naina Devi Ji



Diara Sector New Bilaspur Town



Old Bilaspur Town

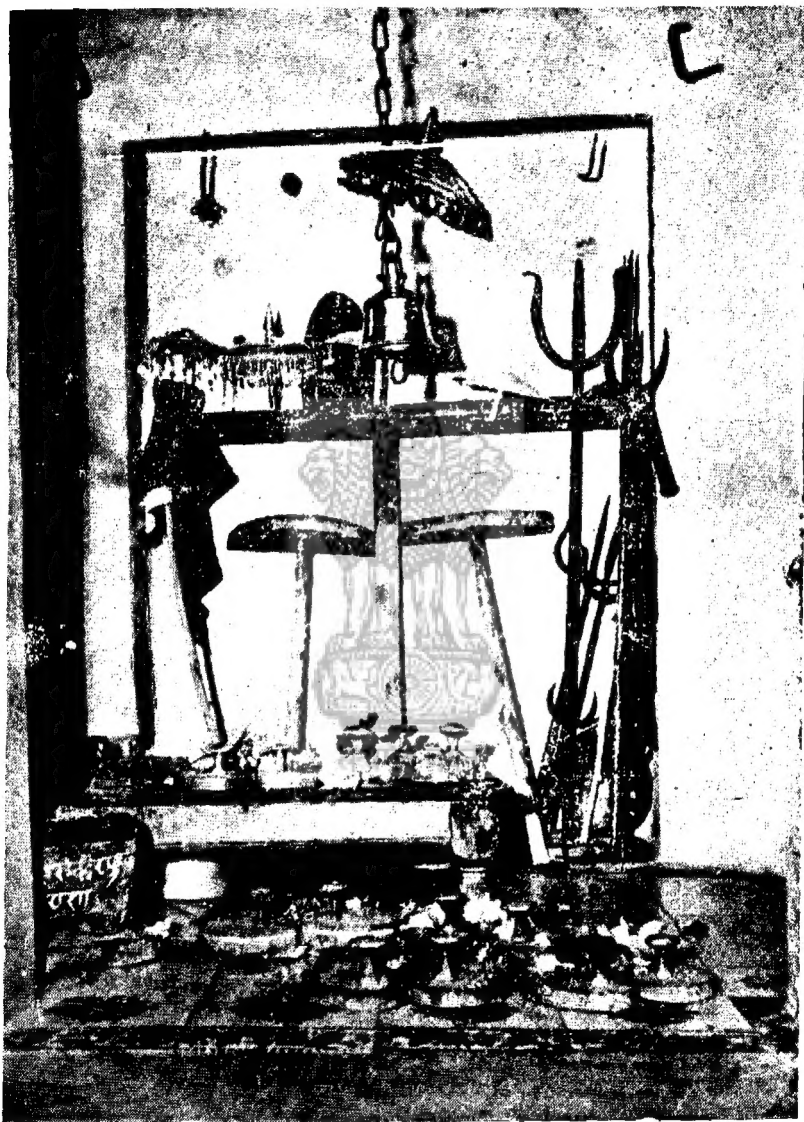


Image of Famous Nar Singh Ji Temple, Dholra, Bilaspur